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THURSDAY, MARCH 1ST, 2012

CONSTRUCTION COMPANY IS SIGNED UP

Waitrose is on its way!

THE arrival of a Waitrose food store in Cowbridge is a step closer – now that a construction company has been appointed to build the development.

REPORT by PHILIP IRWIN

The development project is being put together on the site of the former Hurrans Garden Centre by RS Bird Ltd, and Jeff Bird told The GEM: "We are excited to reach this stage in the process of creating a first-class modern shopping centre in the heart of Cowbridge."

Kier Construction has been appointed to build the superstore, together with a number of retail units that will be included in the building.

The aim is to build a 2,074 square metre store, four retail units totalling 661 square metres, and a car park for 138 vehicles,

Nigel Keen, director of development at Waitrose, said: "We are delighted that our wish to transform the site will soon be a reality.

"Over the years, we have received a lot of letters from customers wanting a Waitrose to go on this part of the town and we are looking forward to playing a part in the community through the creation of local jobs, supporting good causes, and providing greater shopping choice in Cowbridge."

Mr Bird said that the site would officially be handed over on March 5 for Kier to start the demolition process.

He added that the contract with Kier Construction envisaged a completion date of mid-September this year.

At that point, Waitrose would move in and start preparing the store for opening.

Mr Bird added: "In recent months, we have seen a number of people parking in the street (Birds Lane).

"I would advise people that once the site is handed over, it will become a construction site, and it would be appreciated if motorists do not park there any more."

A spokeswoman for the Kier Construction Group said: "Kier Construction is delighted to have been appointed main contractor for this exciting new development in Cowbridge, and will be working closely with the local community to ensure that the construction progresses with as little disruption as possible.

"We have previously undertaken a number of projects in the Vale, including at MOD St Athans and the Town Hall and Library extension in Barry.

"We are looking forward to building this new retail outlet in the centre of Cowbridge, which should be ready by the autumn."

ABOVE: The Mayor and Mayoress of Cowbridge, Andy and Gill Banks, and Vale AM Jane Hutt, help Mary Crandon cut a special anniversary cake. Also in the picture are Sian Evans, Mair Meredith and Catherine Thomas. (FOR FULL STORY, SEE PAGE 4).

'Olympics nicked my cruise ship!'

A family cruise organised by a woman in Cowbridge, has been cancelled – because the ship has been commandeered by the Olympic committee.

Mrs Patricia Price is so upset she didn't just write to complain to the chairman of the cruise line, she also wrote to Sebastian Coe, the chairman of the organising committee of the games.

Mrs Price (80), a seasoned traveller on cruise liners, had hoped to take her daughter Helen Saunders, son-in-law Timothy Saunders, and her 10-year-old grandson Meirion, on a trip from Dover, up the Norwegian coast taking in the fjords.

She told The GEM: "I had booked two cabins, one for me and one for my family, who live in Cardiff. The holiday was aboard Braemar for a week's cruise from August 21-30.

"The dates of the cruise were carefully chosen – not without difficulty – to fit in with school holidays and other important commitments.

(Continued on page 4)

Vale Council tax to rise by 1.75 per cent

COUNCIL tax in the Vale is set to rise by 1.75 per cent.

The decision was taken at a budget-setting meeting yesterday (Wednesday) of the Vale Council's cabinet, although the decision still has to be confirmed by a meeting of the full council.

The 1.75 per cent rise means that a band D property owner will pay an extra £16.20 – taking the bill to £940.05.

On top of this, council tax payers will pay £169.42 to South Wales Police, and also an amount to their local town or community council.

In the case of Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council, the sum is £53.12.

In a report, the cabinet members were told that the average council tax in Wales last year (2011/12) at band D was £968.03, with the Vale Council coming in at £923.85.

However, the proposed budget uses £500,000 of cash held in the council's general reserve, which will, therefore, be at an estimated figure of £6.858,000 at March 31, 2013.

The report says that this is slightly below the recommended minimum level of £7 million, and adds: "The use of reserves for funding recurrent expenditure is clearly not sustainable. Consequently, the strategy set out in the next medium term financial plan will address further the use of reserves to balance the revenue budget."

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It's an election: 'BEGGING BOWLS AT THE READY!'

IT never ceases to amaze me that every time we have an election, local or general, we seem to succumb to the usual jargon of the councillors or politicians, with the same old drivel year in, year out.

Statements like: "*If I am elected, I promise to etc, etc.*"

From the lowly pot-hole in the road, to the major construction site, they all try to lay claim to being the influence on every decision ever taken by council.

With less than three months to the local elections, they are all out of hibernation with begging bowls at the ready.

When they start doing the job properly, instead of using publicity stunts just to make themselves look good and popular, then, and only then, will our town start to prosper.

Barrie V Evans,
Barry Island,
(Independent candidate for Baruc ward)

'Lunacy' surrounding right turn closure

I HAVE written on several occasions to the planning department about the closing of the right turn from Holton Road into Buttrills Road, Barry

I thought that the powers that be had accepted that the original scheme that was introduced in 2007 was ludicrous and that common sense had prevailed when the right turn was reinstated in 2008.

No such luck! Back it has come again.

The most annoying thing is that in these strained financial times these re-arrangements cost the local taxpayer money.

I wrote to the Vale Council at the end of December. protesting strongly about this reinstated piece of lunacy.

To date, despite reminders, I have received neither the courtesy of an acknowledgement of my letter, or a reply.

Perhaps a reply in The GEM might be in order?

David Kennett,
Barry.

Fly tipping in wood is 'unacceptable'

I WISH to express my dismay and horror concerning fly tipping in the Birchgrove Wood, which has been designated as a nature reserve.

On two occasions in recent weeks, we have had dumping of garden waste just off the path leading into the wood from the Birchgrove Road.

The latest incident involved the cut branches of a large Christmas tree and its trunk, along with other waste. This was strewn over a newly- planted area, which we have created, thanks to a grant from Dow Corning.

The work party for February 5 had to postpone some of the planned work for that day in order to clear it up.

In view of the excellent kerbside collection offered by the council for Christmas trees and garden waste, I find this act of vandalism totally unacceptable.

FA Sainsbury, Barry
(Field Officer of Birchgrove Conservation Group)

If you want to make a point on a local issue, email us at: *gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk*

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We will (in certain circumstances) protect a writer's identity, if requested. Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL.

No late American entry, but...

'PEOPLE, *not planes*, WON US THE WAR'

WITH reference to the recent letter by Mr Christopher Short on Mustangs and who won the war – the simple answer is the Allies won.

This was due to millions of service men and women and the uncountable millions of civilians, who worked, fought, died and suffered dreadfully, to rid the world of the warmongers.

The very idea that the Mustang, or any other machine, could win a war, is palpable nonsense. Where I take issue with Mr Short is his denigration of America and their "late arrival to the conflict".

A few facts: America did not want to fight a war, any war, so long as it had no enemies: the weakness of its forces and armaments bears witness to this. On September 3, 1939, the UK declared war on Germany to fulfil our commitment to Poland.

Russia was then an ally of Germany. On June 22, 1941, Germany invaded Russia. Russia joined the Allies. On December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbour took place and the USA was now at war with Japan and Germany.

On August 17, 1942, USAAF B17s arrived in the UK. The RAF transferred its three Eagle Squadrons (comprising US volunteers) to the USAAF. The arriving US units were equipped with Spitfires pending arrival of their own aircraft.

In my book, that has to be seen as a very rapid response! The USA undertook massive rearmament and development programmes, and Mustangs were helped by installation of Merlin engines.

Mustangs were introduced to European skies, the only fighter in the world able to escort USA day bombers to Berlin and back... Prelude to D-Day, US bombers increased their raids partly to get the GAF to attack them. US Mustangs knock them out of the sky.... Desperate Germans throw their night-fighters into the battle, losing two-thirds of their force. RAF night bombers delighted... Result for D-Day and beyond—a broken and spent GAF.

The human cost to USAAF Eighth Air Force: Out of the 210,000 combat crewmen, losses were 26,000 to 28,000 fatalities, some 28,000 crewmen were shot down and made POWs, 25,000 wounded casualties and some 72,000 general casualties.

***Note:* Among the USAAF combat crewmen there were a significant number of volunteers of Germanic or Italian ethnicity.**

No denigration of the Americans needed here, Mr Short, just our grateful thanks and continued appreciation for what the USA did for us in those troubled times. Another thing to remember, it wasn't really their war.

As a young boy at the time, Yanks – "Thanks for the gum".

MG de Garis, (RAF retd),
Cowbridge.

Eisteddfod memories

THE children of Cogan Nursery are involved in a history project and are trying to trace people with memories of eisteddfodau held locally.

An eisteddfod was held in Barry in 1968 and one member of our staff recalls singing with the Gladstone School Choir.

Does anyone else remember this or other eisteddfodau they might have taken part in?

Any information would be gratefully received.

Kay Rawlinson,
Cogan Nursery
(02920 701193)

'Modern cinema is long overdue'

THE Save Our Cinema Association (SOCA) group were extremely disappointed after losing the fight for Barry's last cinema, the Theatre Royal.

A new modern cinema is long overdue for our town, and the current proposed Barry Island pleasure park redevelopment plan addresses this by means of allocated space to include a multiplex cinema provision.

With state-of-the-art 3D digital projection and comfortable viewing surroundings that cinema-goers have come to expect from today's multiplex operators, such a facility may also extend accessibility to a wider audience, by offering National Theatre plays and Metropolitan Opera Live transmissions.

In today's market, there are many available options to enable individual film viewing choice.

However, SOCA believe that giving Barry and the Vale community a preference of enjoying a film in a cinema environment should not be overlooked.

Therefore, it is hoped this facility will be looked at favourably and come to fruition, as part of the decision-making process, when the proposed planning application is again considered by the Vale Council committee at its meeting on March 1.

P Sutton, Barry
(on behalf of SOCA)

'Not a try, so let's move on!'

HAVING thoroughly enjoyed watching last Saturday's rugby international from the comfort of my armchair, I have since become somewhat incensed by the often repeated reference by many of the post-match analysts to England's 'disallowed try'.

By implication, this term suggests that Wales's victory was somehow achieved by default.

In all cases of the possibility of a try having been scored, the referee has three clear options in making his decision:

Firstly, by declaring himself that a try had without question has been scored; secondly, by consultation with the nearest touch judge; and finally, if the decision is still in doubt, he has recourse to the third referee with the benefit of camera recordings.

If after that consultation the outcome is still indecisive, then the try cannot be awarded. This decision is then final and beyond dispute, and although it may be the subject of much debate in pubs and clubs for many years thereafter, it cannot be changed.

The would-be scorer is always going to claim his score – but often, as on Saturday, he is the least qualified to make that claim, as he was buried beneath a pile of bodies of both colours.

To those who do not follow the rugby game, this matter may not seem of any great importance; but on Saturday, both teams had given every ounce of their skill, energy and commitment for the pride of their country, and it would be a shame to spoil this with irresponsible reporting.

A try is either awarded or not. There is no such thing as a 'disallowed try'.

So let us hear no more of it.

Jim Morgan,
Llantwit Major
(See comment, on back page).

'Is Treoes road worst in Vale?'

YOUR recent article regarding the re-surfacing of the main road through Cowbridge made me quite envious.

It would appear that Coun Jeff Cox has some influence with the Vale of Glamorgan highway department.

I wonder if he could possibly take a drive through Treoes village and appreciate the road conditions that the residents have to put up with?

It may well be that the village is situated too far from the Barry offices, and therefore suffers from 'out-of-sight, out of mind'.

Should the Vale Council consider running a competition for the worst road under its responsibility, I would recommend the Treoes road be considered.

L Wigley,
Treoes.

'Take an interest'

I WOULD like to strongly advise every GEM reader to view the local development plans (LDP) submitted by the council, either via the website, at one of the planned exhibitions, or at their local library.

It is important that we see what developments could take place around us. Some of you will be very surprised.

We only have six weeks to view these plans and given that they may change the face of the Vale forever, it is important not to waste time.

Kirstin Clouston,
St Nicholas

Residents can help shape Approach

THE Vale Council's bid to create a recreational community amenity at Cemetery Approach is a very welcome initiative – and in line with the wishes of the vast majority of Barry people – because 11,300 of them signed a petition three years ago to prevent housing development despoiling this lovely avenue – an open space gifted to the town by the British government in 1954.

Recent letters to the local press suggest that political opportunism is behind the council's initiative and the Labour Party's about-turn.

Well, we all know that local elections are around the corner and the instinct for self-preservation is keenest when politicians seek our support. However, that does not alter the fact that this could become a landmark project in terms of a partnership between the council, local people and other interested parties.

Funding and the willingness to give local people a direct say in the future of Cemetery Approach, Barry, are the key factors.

The council is undertaking a consultation exercise asking the public for their views and ideas.

That consultation must be genuine and transparent, not just a box-ticking charade.

The people of Barry can make a real contribution by writing, phoning or going online.

Make your contribution count.

Derek Hooper, Barry
(FocusBARRY supporter)

HIGH TIDE TIMES
(UNTIL MARCH 8)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
01 Thur	11.11	7.6	23.42	7.4
02 Fri			12.29	7.1
03 Sat	01.15	7.0	14.16	7.1
04 Sun	02.49	7.3	15.35	7.5
05 Mon	03.58	8.1	16.29	8.2
06 Tues	04.48	8.7	17.15	8.9
07 Wed	05.32	9.4	17.57	9.5
08 Thur	06.12	9.9	18.37	10.0

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should always check with a tide table specific to their location.

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Cowbridge Book Festival is preparing for exciting line-up of top authors

REPORT by TIM CHAPMAN

LAST year's inaugural Cowbridge Book Festival proved a huge success and preparations are already well under way for this year's event in May.

In 2011, there were a host of big names including Tony Blair's former spokesman, Alastair Campbell, thriller writer, Belinda Bauer, and sportsmen Geoff Thomas and John Hartson.

The festival coordinator, Stella Cheeseman, said work is going on behind the scenes to deliver another entertaining line-up.

Stella told The GEM: "From May 11 to May 18, a host of distinguished authors will descend on the town to talk about their books.

"Their book presentations will cover every genre from historical to autobiographical, crime, poetry, romance, travel, gardening, sport and even one book entitled 'Booze For Free'!

"Visitors will also have the opportunity to meet and chat with the authors and purchase signed copies of their books.

"May 12 will see a very special visitor for the young of every age when 'The Gruffalo Comes to Cowbridge'.

"He'll be greeting children in the story-telling marquee in the newly refurbished Old Hall Gardens.

"There will be plenty of children's activities, a variety of craft stalls and the RAF St Athan Voluntary Band will be on hand to provide some '*oompa pa pa*'."

The opening event last year, which featured leukaemia survivor Geoff Thomas, who spoke about his book *Riding Through the Storm*, dovetailed perfectly with the festival's aim of donating the funds raised to cancer research.

This year, the organisers have broadened the causes that will benefit, as Stella explained: "The Cowbridge Book Festival is now a registered charity and all proceeds from this year's event will be divided equally between The Noah's Ark Appeal, Children's Hospital of Wales and Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research."

The GEM will publicise more details on the festival as they become available in the forthcoming weeks.

FLASHBACK: Geoff Thomas launched last year's inaugural festival by talking about his book 'Riding Through the Storm'. Geoff was happy to sign copies of his book for local people, including Vale MP Alun Cairns.

Restaurant hosts National Eisteddfod fundraising event

PIZZA and Prosecco at Arboreal topped the menu at a National Eisteddfod fundraising event in Cowbridge.

Organised by the Welsh St Donat's Appeals Committee, the evening raised £450.

A silent auction was held, featuring original artworks by local artist and former Welsh international rugby player Brian Davies, landscape artist Rob Piercy, ceramic sculptor Huw Davies and a musical composition by the internationally acclaimed harpist Catrin Finch.

On behalf of the organising committee, Janet Davies said: "The event at Arboreal was highly enjoyable and I would like to thank all the staff for making us so welcome. Huge thanks go as well to everyone who supported the evening and made it such a sociable occasion.

"With the Eisteddfod looming ever closer, it's great to see a whole host of bilingual fundraising events such as this taking place all over the Vale."

ABOVE: Rhodri and Lucy Owen were guests on the night. (Photographs by Mike Wilcock).

PIZZA A PROSECCO
Pizza a Prosecco oedd ar y fwydlen ym mwyty Arboreal, Y Bont-Faen, mewn noson i godi arian tuag at Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Bro Morgannwg. Trefnwyd y digwyddiad gan bwyllgor apel Llanddunwyd a'r cylch a fe llwyddwyd i godi £450.

Yn ystod y noson cynhaliwyd ocsiwn tawel o weithiau celf gan artistiaid o Gymru, yn eu plith yr artist lleol a'r cyn chwareuwr rygbi Brian Davies, yr arlunydd Rob Piercy, gwaith seramig gan Huw Davies a chyfansoddiad cerddorol gan y delynores byd enwog Catrin Finch.

Ar ran y pwyllgor, dywedodd Janet Davies: "Roedd yn noson wych yn Arboreal a hoffwn ddiolch i'r staff yno i gyd am ymestyn croeso twymgalon i ni.

Diolch hefyd i bawb wnaeth ddod i'n cefnogi a gwneud y noson yn un mor bleserus.

"Does dim llawer o amser nawr hyd nes y bydd yr Eisteddfod yn digwydd a braf yw gweld bwrlwm o weithgareddau'n cymryd lle ar hyd a lled y Fro i gefnogi'r wyl arbennig hon."

ABOVE: Enjoying the atmosphere at the Eisteddfod fundraising event.

Latest news from the Cowbridge U3A

ON February 8, we enjoyed a fascinating and interesting talk by Sara Huws on the rebuilding of St Teilo's Church at St Fagans Museum.

It combined technology, archeology, medieval beliefs and under floor heating (not Roman, but latest technology!) TB

Cowbridge NFU Ladies

THE annual general meeting of the Cowbridge Branch of the NFU ladies was held on Tuesday, February 21, at Penllyn Village Hall.

A new committee has been elected for the next two years (2012/13). Mrs Janet Lewis is now the new chairperson and Mrs Janet Rees the new secretary. The treasurer is Mrs Margaret Rees.

A very interesting talk was given by interior designer Mrs Fiona Martin, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. A vote thanks was given by Mrs Ray Evans.

If anyone is interested in joining our monthly meetings, telephone Janet on 01446 760478. A total of £400 was raised and sent to our chosen charity, which is Help For Heroes.

A packed diary, and a talk on Russia's trees

PENLLYN & DISTRICT WI

AT the monthly meeting in the village hall, the minutes were read by secretary, Jane Exell, agreed, and signed by the president, Novello Peters.

Information was given on forthcoming local and federation events, and reminders regarding the Diamond Jubilee card competition, and the group meeting on March 22.

Some members expressed interest in attending the flower arranging demonstrators' meeting in April.

We were informed that the subject for the Glamorgan Calendar for 2014 is 'Waterfalls, Weirs and Cascades in Glamorgan'.

Our photographers were encouraged to enter.

Our darts team is practising hard for the Federation competition, and we wish them every success.

The theme for the Glamorgan WI Show in July will be 'village life' and the branch is taking part again this year. We were also informed of the Federation pantomime, planned for November.

Unfortunately, the planned speaker was unable to attend, so vice- president, Rhiannon Cory, stepped into the breach and gave a fascinating illustrated talk on her 'Tours to Russia with the International Dendrology Society'.

She explained that dendrology is the study of trees and gave us a detailed picture of the landscape and way of life in the parts of Russia she had visited.

The next meeting will be on March 6, at 7.30pm, in the village hall, when the committee will present – 'Not a St David's Day Celebration'!

New members are always warmly welcomed; we meet on the first Tuesday in every month (except August) at 7.30pm in Penllyn Village Hall.

For further information, contact Novello on 01656 674191 or Marjorie on 01656 647115. **MN**

World Book Day is celebrated at Holy Cross Church

WITH World Book Day happening on Friday, March 1, Holy Cross Church thought it would be good to take part in celebrating books with a book sale and story telling.

This will take place at the church on Saturday, March 3, from 10am-2pm.

Already all sorts of books are ready for the sale, from books for little bookworms, through to the more mature reader.

Donations of books are welcome and can be left at Holy Cross Church.

As part of the day, local story teller Kate Hibbert will be on hand to spin tales at 11.30am and again at 1pm.

Refreshments will be available, so come and spend some time poring over books, and perhaps find a new one to take away and treasure. You will enjoy yourselves!

Proceeds from the sale will be shared between Holy Cross Church and the Lymphoma Association – supporting those with lymphatic cancer.

For more information, telephone me on 01446 775947.

The book sale is at Holy Cross Church, Church Street, Cowbridge. A warm welcome and a shelf full of treasures awaits. Bookworms of all ages very welcome.

Sue Freeland

Members defy works to attend

BONT FAEN WI NEWS

February has proved to be a very interesting month, with a trip to Cardiff Crown Court the highlight.

We thoroughly enjoyed the tour and the opportunity to attend.

Mr Phil Pinder came to our February meeting to give us a talk on the 'History and work of the RSPB'.

Tarmacing the area around the Town Hall made it difficult for members to gain entrance to the Lesser Hall, and Mr Pinder made it but without his display boards. He then had to speak over the noise of the machines outside. He did this with great humour and we were soon laughing and learning. Thanks to Mr Pinder for continuing, I am sure many would have given up.

I also have to say many thanks to the husbands who had to drop their wives off in order for them to attend.

March will see us attending *Birds of a Feather* at the New Theatre, and our speaker for March is Mrs Anne-Merlini, who is going to give a demonstration on spring flower arrangements.

Guests are very welcome on March 15 at 8pm in the Lesser Hall, Cowbridge, when a small charge will be made in line with Federation rules.

Jacky Jones

Eisteddfod evening

A 'CAWL A CHAN' (supper and song) evening will take place in Cowbridge Rugby Club this Friday (March 2) at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £10, and proceeds go to the staging of the National Eisteddfod in the Vale in August.

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'I lost my holiday to the Olympics'

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

She added: "My grandson has been looking forward to the trip with so much excitement that he had started reading about Norway in preparation for it.

"Then on February 20, I received the news that the cruise dates had been cancelled because the Braemar had been commandeered by the Olympic committee. It is disgraceful.

"We were offered the same cruise a week later, during the first week in September. That is inconvenient because it is the first week back to school for my grandson, and my son-in-law, a bard, will be attending the Cornish 'gorsedd'."

In a letter to Mrs Price, Fred Olsen Cruise Lines explained: "I regret to advise you that the MV Braemar will be unavailable in July/August 2012 for your scheduled cruise.

"The ship will now be used to meet our recently finalised commitments in respect of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games."

The company offered a cruise in the first week of September, or an alternative cruise at some time in 2012.

Mrs Price was offered a £200 cabin credit for the 'follow-on' cruise, but the revised dates were not convenient and the family have reluctantly decided to forgo the trip they had looked forward to so much.

ABOVE: Mrs Patricia Price says she has now lost confidence in Fred Olsen Cruise Lines, after missing out on her trip to Norway in August.

It has left a bitter taste in the mouth for Mrs Price, who points out that the Olympic organising committee have had seven years to prepare for the games. London was selected as the host city in July, 2005.

She suspected the Braemar is to be used as a floating hotel, perhaps on the Thames.

Mrs Price said: "I am disillusioned and upset with Fred Olsen Cruises and have put my feelings in a letter to the chairman Mr Fred Olsen Jnr.

"I also wrote to Lord Coe at the House of Lords to tell him how disgusted I was.

"The ship was prebooked and the company should have told the Olympic committee it was unavailable."

A Fred Olsen Cruise Lines' spokeswoman said: "Fred Olsen Cruise Lines will be supporting the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games this summer by chartering out its 929-guest cruise ship Braemar to provide accommodation for key games' workers for a period of 34 days, from July 12 to August 15, 2012.

"Our guests are extremely important to us, and it is always a very difficult decision to rearrange guests' cruises when we have taken bookings; however, we have deliberated very carefully before making this decision.

"The ship has been made available to the organising committee of the Olympic Games to provide short-term accommodation for up to 900 staff, and will be based in the East London dock (Royal Albert or King George V) close to the main transport hub for workers.

"The ship will be used for food and accommodation only, and the ship's leisure facilities, including the swimming pool, bars, and hot tubs will not be available to workers throughout the charter period."

She added: "Guests whose existing bookings on Braemar have been affected have been offered an alternative cruise, together with a goodwill gesture to acknowledge the inconvenience this may cause. Guests who choose not to take up this offer will be given a full refund."

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Business is hit by a metal theft

ANOTHER local business has fallen victim to the current wave of thefts targeting items that can be sold for their scrap metal value.

The Place For Homes Furniture store in Llandow has been the latest to be hit.

Rhian Francis of the Place for Homes explained how the sign had been stolen from the entrance to the retail area on the Llandow estate on Thursday, February 23.

The sign, approximately 12 foot x 3 foot was made of metal and provided directions to the 50,000 square foot furniture and flooring store on Llandow, which has been established for more than 40 years.

Mrs Francis expressed her concern over the recent wave of thefts across the country of metal and metal artefacts for scrap, and supported the proposal to increase regulations on the sale of scrap metal.

She said: "Although not expensive to replace, the removal of the sign could cause difficulties for customers looking to visit.

"We will now investigate the possibility of the sign being made from alternative materials."

Join the Rotary charity fun walk

THE Rotary Club of Cowbridge is organising a charity fun walk on Sunday, April 22.

Walkers are invited to raise money for their favourite charity and enjoy a walk in the beautiful Vale.

The route begins at Cowbridge Town Hall and proceeds via the 'Three Fields' and 'Trevor's Field' to the Bush Inn at St Hilary, returning via 'the Hanging Clump' to the town hall car.

The walk is about five miles and should take about two hours. The route is suitable for all adults but is not recommended for pushchairs or small children.

All walkers pay an entry fee of £5, which will go to Rotary charities, and will receive an entry pack which will include sponsorship forms and further details.

Walkers can raise individual sponsorship for registered charities, which they can donate directly, or pass to the Rotary Club for local use.

Further details and entry forms can be obtained from HARRY HELLER on 01446 75393.

Friendship Club trains for the armchair bowls!

COWBRIDGE Friendship Club members were in strict training at the February meeting for their return match later in the year with the residents of Southways – when the club hopes to retain winning ways with armchair bowls!

Once the two teams had been selected there was fierce competition between the red and blue teams and of course we had the usual complaints that the surface was not straight, but all in all, everyone enjoyed the afternoon with plenty of fun and laughter. It was then time for afternoon tea and cakes.

Meetings are held on the last Thursday of the month, so if you, or someone you know, would like to join please ring 01656 668446 to find out more.

PAT SMITH (Leader)

Chamber of trade's meeting

COWBRIDGE Chamber of Trade is holding a meeting on March 6, at 9.15am in the Bear Hotel, with two main items on the agenda.

Chairman Alun John told The GEM: "We want to formulate the chamber's response to the LDP, which is currently out for public consultation.

"I imagine that the discussion will be looking at what car parking provision has been made for the town in the LDP."

He added: "We will also be reviewing the membership rates for the chamber."

Art show

A NEW art exhibition opens in Cowbridge next week at the Old Hall Gallery.

Entitled 'Oceanlight', it will feature oil paintings, screen prints, and watercolours by Adrian Paul Metcalfe, and will run from March 5 to April 5.

Admission is free and planned opening times are: Monday to Thursday, 9.30am–4pm, and Friday, 9.30am–9pm. It is advisable to telephone 01446 773831 on the day to confirm opening times.

FLOWER ARRANGING

COWBRIDGE and District Flower Arrangers Club meets at 7.30pm on Wednesday, March 7 in the Lesser Hall, Cowbridge Town Hall, where Adrian Cook will give a demonstration entitled 'Spring Madness.' A warm welcome awaits all.

Merched y Wawr celebrate 40 years in Cowbridge

ON Saturday at an overflowing coffee morning in the Lesser Hall, the Cowbridge branch of Merched y Wawr celebrated 40 years in the town.

The event was held to raise funds for the National Eisteddfod which is coming to the Vale this year.

The Cowbridge Mayor and Mayoress, Andy and Gill Banks, and Vale AM Jane Hutt, came to support Mary Crandon, the branch chairman, as she cut the cake.

The Mayor hoped that Merched y Wawr from all over Wales will visit Cowbridge during Eisteddfod week.

Jane Hutt said: "It was lovely to be able to congratulate the Bont Faen Merched y Wawr on their 40th birthday and to join the coffee morning at the Cowbridge Town Hall, to help raise funds for the forthcoming National Eisteddfod in Llandow in August."

Penblwydd hapus!

DYDD Sadwrn bu Merched y Wawr, Y Bontfaen yn dathlu mewn bore coffi yn Neuadd y dref, bod y gangen yn 40ain oed eleni.

Cynhaliwyd y bore coffi ew mwyn codi arian ar gyfer yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol. Daeth Maer y Maeres Y Bontfaen, Andy a Gill Banks, a'r AC Jane Hutt atom i helpu Mary Crandon, Llwydd y gangen i dorri'r gacen.

Vale sale is held for the National Eisteddfod fund

Photographs by ANDY WICKS

AS the two reports here show, local fundraising for the National Eisteddfod at Llandow is gaining pace as the prestigious event approaches in August.

On Sunday, February 26, volunteers organised a special sale (above) at Llantonian Hall, Llantwit Major. "It is thanks to dozens of events like these that the National Eisteddfod can be staged," a spokesperson said.

ABOVE: The Llantwit sale featured a wide range of goods and enthusiastic sellers – all for the Eisteddfod.

WORKING WITH WILLOW

A LOCAL environmental group, Transition Cowbridge, is hosting two 'willow workshops'.

On Saturday, March 10, the subject is willow harvest and basketry, and on Sunday, March 11, it will be building a living willow structure and fence weaving.

For more details, email: transitioncowbridge@googlemail.com or call Michaela on 07590 237 220.

'Frugal lunch' is a success

CHURCHES in the Cowbridge area recently invited local residents to a fundraising lunch with a simple message.

A spokeswoman said: "Churches Together in Cowbridge and District would like to thank everyone who attended the first 'Frugal Lunch' at Noah's Place on February 24.

"A total of £118.56 was raised for Christian Aid."

The lunch consisted of a simple bowl of soup with bread, and the event began Churches Together's 2012 Lenten celebrations.

There are a number of Lenten study groups taking place entitled 'Finding A Voice' based on the film, *The King's Speech*.

If anyone would like to take part in the study groups, details can be obtained by contacting the Holy Cross parish office on 01446 772 302.

KH

The mixed group enjoy activities at Storey Arms in the Brecon Beacons.

Cowbridge Comprehensive pupils go Outward Bound!

THE year-10 GCSE PE students had an opportunity to take part in an outdoor adventure activity camp at Storey Arms in Brecon.

20 students took up the opportunity and with two members of PE staff accompanying them; they stayed for the week before half term.

After arriving at Storey Arms and settling into their rooms, the pupils split into two groups and completed their first activity, which was to walk up Pen-Y-fan.

With the snow still on the ground, the students were quick to have a great time, diving into the snow and having a snowball fight!

The first evening saw the students ALL complete a rope trail in the dark. On the second day, the groups competed in separate activities; the boys' group went caving and the mixed group went walking, which the students finished with jumping off 'Loonies' Leap'!

In the evening, the students were dropped off with compasses and set out to navigate themselves across the fields to the minibus one km away; again all students were successful in completing this task.

On the Wednesday, everyone took part in canoeing, but Lloyd Elms volunteered to go kayaking.

The students and teachers had to navigate down a river through quite a few rapids. Alex Guard and Joe Gaughan were first to capsize, closely followed by Mr Thomas and Mrs Jones!

Harry Goodfellow and Matthew Lock also found themselves in the water!

Bearing in mind it was 0 degrees, the students were extremely cold!

In the evening, two groups set off from Storey Arms and were dropped off a mile away and navigated back to Storey Arms or to the minibus. Once again, all pupils successfully completed this task.

On Thursday, the groups swapped over and took part in the caving and gorge walking.

On the final evening, the students had a little time to relax before packing on the Friday with some bowling to finish a wonderful week. Annabel Curle won the bowling, scoring 118 points, then it was back to school in time for half term.

A thoroughly enjoyable week was had by all students, who definitely learnt the value of communication and teamwork through the week.

Well done to all those who took part. **LJ**

COMMUNITY NEWS
TREOES, LLANGAN & ST MARY HILL

Your local correspondent is Nancy Davidge, "Tynewydd", Llangan. (01656) 860303

St Canna's meetings

THE second meeting which took place recently, was well attended by residents of Llangan and Treoes.

The speaker, Mr Alan Jones, gave an interesting talk on the life and times of Welsh poet, Dylan Thomas, with film of the poet's birthplace.

A vote of thanks was given by the Rev Peter Raikes, followed by refreshments.

I am unable to give a more in-depth account of this interesting talk, as I was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

The next meeting at the St Canna's vestry will hear a talk by Lucy and Rhodri Owen on 'Life in the Media'. this will take place on Thursday, March 22.

Auction

AN auction in Treoes Community Hall raised £1,400, not £3,000 as stated in a previous report. Apologies to the hall committee for the misunderstanding.

Saron chapel

THERE was an air of sadness in Saron on Sunday, February 26 as it was the final service to be conducted by Mr Alwyn Evans.

He will be missed by the people of Treoes and the surrounding are who have enjoyed his sermons over many years.

Mr Evans was presented with cards and monetary gifts, and Mrs Evans received a lovely bouquet.

Time to make a will is now!

SOUTHERNDOWN WI

ONE wonders if, in our latter years, we are increasingly affected by such emotions as retribution, generosity, love, meanness, a whole gamut of personal good or ill feelings towards our nearest and dearest.

Phillip Davies, a retired solicitor, has experience of will making but has extended this knowledge further afield – as contained in his talk, 'Weird wills'.

We were urged to make a will' it's never too early, when of sound mind....

Think carefully, listen to advice, even if not heeded and prepare to revise or change a will every four-five years.

Human characteristics can change at a whim. Wills – weird or not – should be written on paper, can be long (95,000 words..) or short (everything to wife); also think hard about what to reveal to a solicitor!

President Meryl dealt with the county letter and members should please note: Spring council meeting (Barry); National Eisteddfod (Llandow); Make a bag for sale; ACWW project 'Go nuts'; fundraising for women in Cameroon; a card for Queen's diamond jubilee; photographs please for 2013 calendar; link meeting Colwinston, March 22.

Meryl explained the link system for the benefit of new members. Southerndown's link WIs are Colwinston & Llysworney, Merthyr Mawr and Penllyn.

There is a celebration of Wales at St Brides Major church hall, at 7.15pm, on March 8.

COMMUNITY NEWS
ST BRIDES MAJOR

Your local correspondent is Patricia Bevan-Morgan (01656) 880418

Saint's steps

ON Tuesday, February 14, members and friends of the St Brides Major branch of the Mothers' Union enjoyed the showing of the film made of the pilgrimage to Ireland when members of the parish followed in the steps of St Bridget, patron saint of our parish.

The excellent film was made and edited by Father Philip.

The monthly corporate eucharist was held at All Saints Church, Southerndown, on February 28.

Sadly missed

THE funeral has taken place of Iris Lintern.

Iris was well known in the village and will be sadly missed by all.

Friends and family later met at the Fox and Hounds for refreshment.

Residents

OGMORE Retired Residents' Association are meeting once again for their new session on March 8. Eric and Joy will show film and talk about 'Little Trains of Austria.'

On March 15, the annual general meeting will be held before a new session commencing on April 19.

New members are always welcome. Meetings are held in All Saints, Southerndown, with plenty of room for parking.

Local market

THE monthly local produce market held on February 18 was once again a success, despite the very inclement weather of the day.

The next market day, on March 17, will be a craft and produce day, with lots of interesting stalls, plus the usual tea/coffee refreshments.

Charity event

TOMORROW, March 2, a meal and auction will be held at the church hall, St Brides Major at 7.30pm, in aid of the Joshua Foundation.

Tickets, £15, are available from Judith and Tracey.

Pendoylan excitement mounts as £3.6million project takes shape

THERE are exciting times ahead at Pendoylan Church in Wales Primary School, as phase 1 of their £3.6 million new school project nears completion.

After many years of lobbying for the financial support necessary to transform this small village school, Pendoylan CW Primary is now very close to becoming the modern educational establishment its staff and pupils have long dreamed of.

The Headteacher, Mrs Lyn Murray, has ensured that this excellent school has a bright and secure future.

She said: "We have been expanding as a school for many years now, having started with just 53 pupils on roll when I took over as Head in 1994, to over 200 now.

"Obviously, this has meant using temporary facilities to house classes. In fact, our junior department have been using portacabins for a long time and they've managed brilliantly – but soon, within weeks, they'll have a brand new building that will do justice to our wonderful standard of teaching."

The construction company ISG Pearce is working with architects Petersen Williams, structural engineers the Austin Partnership, mechanical and engineering firm Hicks Titley Partnership and quantity surveyors EC Harris on the project.

Jon James, regional director of ISG Pearce Wales has confirmed that phase 1 of the project is on-schedule for completion in early March.

He commented: "It's a building everyone can be proud of."

The junior pupils will soon be moving into their brand-new classrooms before phase 2, a 20-week refurbishment and upgrade programme will begin on the old school building.

This will mean that by the end of July 2012, this voluntary-aided, co-education school, which dates back to 1873, will have gained a new assembly hall, an additional four classrooms, a creative arts teaching area plus a new kitchen and dining room.

Year 6 teacher, and Assistant Head, Mrs. Jenny Edwards said: "The new classrooms are looking fabulous and we're all very excited about the move, especially the children, they can't wait."

Monoprint experiments

ON Thursday, March 8, Cowbridge Art Society has a change from its published programme, where local artist Sue Edwards takes the postponed practical session in monoprinting.

Members are asked to bring along plexiglass/formica, acrylic paint, brushes, rags, sponges, paper, roller/wooden spoon, and drawings

The society meets at the Old Hall (7pm – 9pm) and visitors are welcome. For further details of the society, see www.thecowbridgeartsociety.com.

COLWINSTON AND LLYSWORNEY WI

Ladies try out indoor curling

AT the February meeting, the indoor curling set was borrowed from Federation House.

Teams of four battled against each other trying to get the 'stone' onto the target. The winning team scored eight points out of a possible 32, so lots more practice is needed. If this ever becomes an Olympic event we will be ready!

Members were reminded of the trip to see the *King and I* in Cardiff and the Link meeting in March.

Thanks were given to all the bar staff at the recent village pantomime another very successful show.

The next meeting is on March 12 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm, when the speaker will be from the Women's Refuge in Cardiff.

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Vale MP on hand to deliver cheque

Left to right: Anwar Shahjahan, Alun Cairns MP, and Saiful Alam.

VALE MP Alun Cairns was on hand recently to present a cheque for money raised during a charity dinner event for the Barry-based charity The Shahjahan Foundation (SFUK), a voluntary organisation supporting educational, health, social and community projects.

Charity trustee Anwar Shahjahan met with the Vale MP and Saiful Alam, owner of The Rahil Restaurant in Barry, to receive the cheque for £365 raised during an evening of food and and entertainment at the Rahil.

Over 50 people attended the glittering event, including Miss Wales 2010, Courtenay Hamilton, and Miss Wales 2011, Sarah Manchipp.

Alun Cairns and retired headteacher of Barry Comprehensive, David Swallow, were among the guests of honour at the charity fundraising dinner to raise money for local mothers and children in the community.

Mr Cairns said: "I was delighted to be able to attend the charity dinner.

"The work that SFUK in Barry do is really important as they help provide a range of activities and support for local mothers and children."

VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL
GRANTS TO COMMUNITY/VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Applications are invited from COMMUNITY/VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS (not individuals) seeking assistance for the financial year 2012/2013.

Applicants are required to complete an application form which is available from: Accountancy Section, Finance Dept., Civic Offices, Holton Rd., Barry. CF63 4RU. Tel: 01446 709250/186. Fax: 01446 701729.

Applications from or on behalf of national organisations, or other organisations, which are not based within the Council's area **will not normally be considered.**

Applications will be considered on their merit and according to this Council's criteria, a copy of which accompanies the application form. Submission of an application does not automatically ensure that a grant will be made.

Organisations in receipt of this funding last year will have already been sent the appropriate form for completion and need not respond to this advertisement.

Application forms are to be returned by Monday, 30 April 2012.

Civic Offices
Holton Road
Barry CF63 4RU

Sian Davies,
Director of Finance, ICT & Property

VALE of GLAMORGAN
BRO MORGANNWG

Reader's view

'BARRY WORST FOR POT HOLES'

I SPEND a lot of my time on the road, but I can quite confidently inform you that Barry has the worst pot holes in the whole of south Wales and the M4 corridor.

I drive a VW Scirocco with low profile tyres; in total I have had six punctures, all down to going over a pot hole.

Each tyre cost £236. My car is a lease car and therefore it is under a maintenance package, but it is so inconvenient and time consuming.

There have been times when I had to cancel an appointment with a customer which I have waited for months to get.

I spend most of my time avoiding pot holes when in actual fact I should be concentrating on driving safely. I really do not like travelling at night as I cannot see the holes until it's too late.

Why is it other areas do not experience the same issue? Why is it that when they are repaired, the hole re-appears a couple of months later? How is our road tax being spent in Barry?

Nikki Best,
Welwyn Garden City

Cosmeston protest

A PROTEST is planned in Barry on March 7 against funding cuts and possible closure of Cosmeston medieval village.

Meeting at 5.30pm outside the Civic Offices, it will highlight the fact that the village is a community resource.

The archaeological site was discovered in 1977, and excavated, with the buildings then reconstructed during the 1980s.

Groups should bid for coastal grants – *Plaid*

PLAID CYMRU spokesperson for the Vale, Dr Ian Johnson, has called on community groups to apply for grants from a newly established Coastal Communities Fund.

The fund has been established with 50 per cent of the proceeds from the Crown Estate's marine holdings and is to be used for economic growth and regeneration in seaside towns.

Dr Johnson believes that community groups in Barry, which has already been designated a Regeneration Zone, can unlock the funding to continue Barry's regeneration and improve the town.

He explained: "The newly established Coastal Communities Fund includes £1.15m of funding to support economic growth in coastal towns in Wales.

"The money is open to projects run by many different types of organisations that support economic development including charities, social enterprises, voluntary organisations, local businesses as well as local authorities."

Councillors' surgery

Anthony Ernest and Sarah Sharpe, members Vale Council members for the Sully and Lavernock ward, are holding an advice surgery at the Jubilee Hall, Smithies Avenue, Sully, on Saturday, March 10, between 10.30am and 11.30 am.

No appointment is necessary and all are welcome to attend.

PACT meetings

STANWELL PACT: *March 2 in Elfed Avenue United Church at 7pm.*
YSTRADOWEN: *coffee and chat, White Lion public house on March 6 at 11:30am.*
PLYMOUTH PACT: *March 7 in Lower Penarth Community Centre, Brockhill Way at 7pm.*
COURT PACT: *7pm on March 8 at Ysgol Maes Dyfan, Gibbonsdown Rise, Barry.*
CASTLELAND PACT: *7pm on March 14 at the Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry.*

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- Service failures; such as vehicle breakdowns
- New service amendments such as additional materials we can recycle (recently clean foil, emptied aerosols and cartons such as tetra pak)
- Results; such as current recycling rates
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- Road works that may affect your journey time in your area
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Philip Lawrence award for Vale People First's tough message

LAST Thursday, I was fortunate to be able to attend and speak at the Philip Lawrence awards ceremony in the Memorial Hall in Barry, when Frances Lawrence presented her award to Vale People First for their film *Rights Fighters.*

The Philip Lawrence Awards were set up in memory of her husband Philip Lawrence, who was a headteacher in London. Many will remember that he was murdered after going to the aid of a pupil who was being attacked by a gang.

Frances Lawrence set up these awards to celebrate the positive contribution of groups of young people in their communities, challenging violence, bullying and racism.

The Philip Lawrence Network was launched in December 2009 and it aims to show how young people are doing extraordinary things for their communities – leading the way, crossing divides, building bridges between young people and adults and making their communities stronger and safer.

Vale People First, based at the HUB in Barry, is the Philip Lawrence UK Award winner this year for the work they do to speak out about bullying and harassment but also to celebrate their lives, their friends and their families.

Run by a group of 11–25 year olds with learning difficulties from across the Vale, Vale Youth Speak Up raises awareness of the issues disabled young people face.

I have invited Vale People First to show their film *The Rights Fighters* to Assembly members in the spring.

They made the film themselves, including the script, the costumes, artwork and acting. It tackles discrimination and bullying using super-heroes and they wrote a song for the film called 'Nothing About us Without Us".

The awards ceremony in Barry last week was a great success and enjoyed by everyone who came to support the young people.

But the film had tough messages as young people with learning difficulties were turned away from a night club until the 'super hero' intervened.

It took place the day after a debate in the Assembly on a report produced by a cross-party group of AMs on disability related harassment in Wales, with recommendations for the Welsh Government to implement.

As the Minister for Equalities, I responded to the debate, agreeing to all their recommendations and also announcing a new framework for action to tackle all forms of hate crime.

We also discussed it in the newly-formed Race Forum which met last week. It is clear that we will need to learn from groups like Vale People First to get this 'framework for action' right.

In the debate, I said that we all have a duty to protect those who are most vulnerable to harassment in society and to ensure that disabled people and those with long-term health conditions are able to live a life without fear.

We are currently consulting on our equality objectives for the Welsh Government to take forward and we have included an objective to reduce hate crime.

I would encourage members of the public to send in their comments by going onto the Welsh Government website or writing to me at the Welsh Government, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff CF99 1NA.

There is evidence of rising harassment of disabled people in today's society and we must stand up and challenge it. A wheelchair user who was sitting in the gallery watching our debate has reminded us of what life is like.

He said that he has been on the receiving end of hostility aimed at him because of disability.

In supporting the Assembly report, he said: "So it seems all agree that we need to take these things forward and make Wales a more tolerant, safe and understanding place to live, then hopefully, as they did with the smoking ban, the rest of the UK will follow."

Vale People First is playing its part in helping us deliver the sort of Wales where disability harassment is addressed and challenged by Government and all of us in our everyday lives.

In presenting the award last week at the Memorial Hall, Frances Lawrence said: "Vale Youth Speak Up gives young people in their community the power, confidence and voice to make a vital difference to people with disabilities."

For more information on Vale Youth Speak Up, visit valepeople1st.giving.officelive.com or find them on Facebook, Vale People 1st (01446 724010).

ASSEMBLY NOTES

by Vale AM
JANE HUTT
(Minister for Finance and Leader of the House)

'Bus services for the many should receive the subsidy'

THE next meeting of the Barry&Vale Friends of the Earth, will be held at 7.30pm in the Castle Hotel, Jewel Street, Barry, on Tuesday, March 6.

The group will be responding to the Vale Council's Local Development Plan, especially the planned development of green field sites for housing and the council's continued support for incineration, despite all our efforts to recycle and reduce more of our waste.

Energy, whether from waste or other sources, is the major issue. Group members will be asked to support the anti-nuclear campaign, focused on Hinckley Point, just across the water, where the 'cap' for the reactor is going to be made in Japan – according to information received from an engineer working in this field.

Barry & Vale FoE are pleased to see Aberthaw Power Station is to reduce its emissions of noxious gases.

FoE members have spoken with a local nurse who witnesses the effects of pollution on our bodies.

Like us, she wishes to see highly-controlled and realistic reading of atmospheric pollution from the Environment Agency and councils of our highly industrialised areas.

Having considered the environmental effects of possible cuts in public transport subsidies, the group feel that the public subsidy for the airport shuttle service in Rhoose should be cut, because there are several bus services already reaching the airport.

Rural bus services should receive this support, along with urban services, like the No. 88 in Barry. These public bus services for the many, should not suffer for those few who are travelling by air.

Keith Stockdale,
Barry & Vale FoE co-ordinator

Bishops out and about in Barry

ON Sunday, March 11, both the Archbishop of Wales, the Most Reverend Barry Morgan and the Assistant Bishop of Llandaff, the Right Reverend David Wilbourne, are visiting churches in Barry.

The Archbishop will be celebrating and preaching at both the 9.30am mass in St Cadoc's, 'the old village church', and the 11am mass at St Mary's, Holton Road.

He is coming to celebrate the appointment of the new rector of the churches of St Cadoc and St Mary, whose name will be confirmed in the next few days.

The Assistant Bishop of Llandaff, will be celebrating and preaching at a special 10.15am mass at the church of St Dyfan and St Teilo in Merthyr Dyfan Lane, to mark the re-opening of the church after months of repairs and redecoration.

The congregation of St Paul's, Barry, will be joining the congregation of Merthyr Dyfan for this special service. The interior of the 12th century Merthyr Dyfan church is looking splendid indeed after the restoration.

All are welcome to attend the services at the churches, and welcome the bishops to Barry.

The Archbishop of Wales will also be in Barry on Good Friday, when he will lead a midday walk of witness through the town, involving many of the local churches. **TS**

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Barry pupils get a taste of life at Westminster

Alun Cairns MP, Hannah Parker and George Scott from Barry.

TWO Barry Comprehensive pupils recently completed work experience in their local MP's Westminster office.

Alun Cairns and his team have welcomed a host of students over the last year to spend time in the constituency office on the High Street in Barry.

Hannah Parker and George Scott, pupils at Barry Comprehensive, took up an offer to work in Mr Cairns' office in St Stephen's Tower at Westminster earlier this month, having spent time in the High Street office last summer. Hannah explained: "There's no substitute for students to get first-hand experience of a workplace whilst they're still in education.

"Not only did I enjoy visiting Westminster, but I learnt a lot more than I expected I would during my work experience, both in the constituency and parliamentary offices."

George added: "It was a great opportunity to be able to go to Westminster and spend time in Alun's office and find out what it's like to be an MP."

Man (27) used his mother to smuggle drugs

A WOMAN who visited a relation in Parc Prison, Bridgend, was "incredulous" to find that a pair of trainers she handed over contained drugs, it was stated at Cardiff Crown Court.

Her son David Caulfield, a 27-year-old labourer, had given them to her to pass over to the prisoner.

Caulfield, who lives in Liverpool, admitted two charges of causing another to take drugs into prison. He was jailed for four months, suspended for a year, and ordered to carry out 150 hours unpaid work.

Mr Justice Haddon-Cave said: "You allowed your own mother to take those trainers into the prison, and she was found in possession of the drugs.

"It must have been a great shock to her. The smuggling of drugs into prison is a very serious matter."

He said that Caulfield had "landed his mother in it" and she had been an unwitting courier.

Prosecutor Jonathan Bushell said that on the evening of July 23 last year, Mrs Caulfield visited her relation in Parc Prison.

She was searched and officers examined the pair of trainers, in the soles of which were found packages of cannabis and another drug.

"She was arrested and appeared to be absolutely incredulous, and emphatically denied being involved. She said she had collected the items from the defendant and was adamant she would not have brought in drugs."

The defendant was arrested the following day and confirmed that his mother was completely unaware of having the drugs.

Georgina Buckley for Caulfield said: "He acknowledges the gravity of the situation and co-operated fully with the police. He confessed and voluntarily went to Bridgend Police Station. He was extremely foolish."

AJ SICLUNA

The headless horses of St Bride's Major...

GHOSTLY TALES by HAYLEY WILLIAMS

THE village of St Bride's Major lies in the Vale and it is named after St Bridget of Ireland.

It probably dates back to the 12th Century when the parish church was constructed in Norman style by Simon de Londres. This ancient treasure became a listed building in 2002.

The splendour of the Parish Church towered over the village and was a congregational centre for people throughout the community during ancient times.

Inside the building are monuments of dedication to upstanding citizens of the district who were considered important, one being Arnold Butler and his family.

Two monumental plaques are also on display in the vestry from the Bryn Sion Calvinistic Methodist Chapel which was erected in 1859 and classified as a listed building in 2001. By 1987, the chapel was no longer in use and is now the site of residential housing.

St Bride's Major as a community relied upon its many wells and springs for water, and although some were covered up, others can still be seen.

Pilcot Pool was named 'Avon Dawel', or 'Silent River', as it ran underground after a few yards and could no longer be heard.

The landscape was dominated by agriculture where farmers would employ local people to farm the land, needing water from the wells to tend to livestock.

In the vicinity near Blackhall, evidence of lime kilns have been found. These were created to burn timber so that walls could be built to keep sheep in enclosed areas, giving indications of habitation from our past.

Jacob's Well can be found near a turn in the road feeding from the Alun River.

Pant Marie Flanders Well is near Heol-y-Mynydd and has been declared an ancient monument.

St Bride's Major was littered with stone quarries during the olden days, and also had individual trades such as village stores, blacksmith's shops, a police station, a village hall, a bakehouse, and various cobblers.

Other interesting structures from the past include the medieval preaching cross within the grounds of St Bridget's Churchyard, the school bell tower, the War Memorial, dedicated to the bravery of local servicemen and women located in Bull Hill, and Pont Groes Gwta, which is a listed bridge built in the 18th Century.

Penance building ruins can be found in the area, which are thought to have been a secluded home for the monks of Margam Abbey, who had struck up acquaintances with local women, and were exiled here to ask forgiveness for their sins.

One forgotten public house in the centre of St Bride's Major was The Greyhound Inn, which is now a dwelling.

It was a popular 'watering hole' for many groomsmen whose employers visited the local church and moored the horses outside the Inn, and with free time for the groomsmen, they would quench their thirst with local ale.

The lifelike image of an elderly lady wearing old-fashioned black clothing with a flowing skirt has been witnessed wandering up an imaginary road, only to disappear in an instant. Who could this lady be, and why would she want to walk through a village that she would probably no longer recognise?

On the pathway leading to the village shop, the shimmering effigy of a donkey kicking out at an invisible building has been seen, only for it to fade away into the background.

Could this frightful image be a replay from the time when blacksmiths from the village would tend to the needs of shoeing animals, or just tricks of the minds of its witnesses?

My parents lived in St Bride's Major during the 1960s, and my mother experienced the phantom sound of galloping horses upon the common, while walking her two poodles during the hours of darkness.

As the stampede got closer, she could see that they were headless, with no course of direction. Could this terrifying commotion be from another world beyond our understanding, or just a startling figment of imagination?

Fact or fiction? Only you can decide ...

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BARRY MOTHERS' UNION CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY

BRANCH leaders past and present, including Mrs Janet Oeppen who started the Barry Mothers' Union branch in 1987, and her husband Canon John Oeppen, were among 66 members and guests who gathered on February 18 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of its founding.

In line with the aims and objectives of the Mothers' Union, which has 4.1 million members throughout the world and is concerned with all that strengthens and preserves family life, a Holy Eucharist was held in All Saints' Church, Park Road.

The celebrant and preacher at this most uplifting service was Canon Adrian Berry.

The celebration cake, baked and iced by branch member Barbara Butts, was cut by Mrs Janet Oeppen who was delighted that the branch that she had started 25 years ago was going from strength to strength. Membership now stands at 92.

Recently retired branch secretary of 15 years, Mrs Barbara Forte, gave an entertaining 'Round Up' of the last five years of events. Canon Adrian Berry then proposed a toast to the Mothers' Union.

Branch meetings take place in the church hall on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 7.45pm.

There is corporate communion in church at 7pm on the second Thursday of each month. New members are always welcome – just come along.

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Was £275
NOW £79

Ruskin
2 Door Dresser with Glazed Hutch, finished in Light Oak
Was £1178
NOW £549

Trilogy
1.6M Glass Top Table with 4 White & Chrome Dining Chairs
Was £1015
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VALE YOUTH PROJECT WINS AN AWARD FOR SPEAKING UP

A LOCAL youth project, 'Vale Youth Speak Up' was presented with a Philip Lawrence Award at a special event, organised by the crime reduction charity, Nacro, at Barry Memorial Hall.

They were joined by Mrs Frances Lawrence MBE, Jane Hutt AM, the Minister for Equalities, and Keith Towler, the Children's Commissioner for Wales, who presented them with the award.

Founded in July 2009, Vale Youth Speak Up is a user-led self-advocacy children and young people's group of 36 young people aged between 11–25, working to highlight and tackle the issues of discrimination and bullying facing young people with disabilities.

Photograph by Bob Fallon.

A major objective of the project is to empower and improve young people's involvement in decision making processes. The group have used innovative methods to convey the message that people with disabilities can excel when they are listened to and given the right support. They have trained and advised the police, parents and youth services on how to interact with young disabled people.

The project is hoping to draw in more support for their cause, and keep on raising awareness among their community and the general public about the treatment of disabled young people.

Vale People First coordinator, Liz Davidson, said: "To say we are overwhelmed with the recognition of a Philip Lawrence Award is an understatement.

"Vale Youth Speak Up is a group that has only been meeting for two years, and to have attracted such kudos in such a short space of time is incredible.

"This is the second award we have received recognising the quality of participation and inclusion within the last six months."

Mrs Frances Lawrence MBE, said: "Vale Youth Speak Up gives young people in their community the power, confidence and voice to make a vital difference to people with disabilities."

Speaking at the event, Jane Hutt AM, Vale People First trustee, said: "I love Vale People First. They tell me straight what we should be doing in the Welsh Government and what policies we should be changing. They tell me what life is like for them and all the difficulties that disabled people have.

"They are a fantastic model for the whole of Wales and they are tackling issues that are not only a matter for the minister for equalities, but for the minister for transport, education, economy, arts, and sports – every minister has a duty to listen to Vale People First.

"Congratulations to all those involved in the project."

Coffee morning

ALL Saints' Barry Mothers' Union is holding a coffee morning in the Church Hall on Park Road, Barry on March 3 at 10.30am.

Stalls include quality castaways, Spring stall, cake stall and raffle. Admission is 50p.

All proceeds go to Mothers' Union charities.

PLAID SURGERY

PLAID councillors Barry Shaw and Caroline Turner will be joined by Keith Stockdale, Steve Blakeman and Dr Ian Johnson at the County Library, King Square, Barry, for an advice surgery from 11am until 12 midday on Saturday, March 3. No appointments are necessary.

Extra feature at Rail Centre could boost tourism in the area

John Buxton and Rick Auger doing survey work at Barry Rail Centre.

SURVEY work has been done at the Barry Rail Centre for a project that will see the installation of a new locomotive turntable. It is hoped that the turntable will be operational in 2014.

The turntable project team is headed up by chartered civil engineers John Buxton, the managing director of the Barry Rail Centre, and Rick Auger, both of whom played key roles in the installation of the turntable at Minehead on the West Summerset Railway. The turntable there has become a focal point for visitors to Minehead, and the plan is to emulate this at Barry.

John Buxton, chairman of the Cambrian Group which now operates the Barry Rail Centre, said: "We are delighted to have begun the process of installing this 1938-built turntable that was originally installed at Bricklayers Arms depot in South London.

"Once it is in place, we will be able to offer servicing and turning facilities for steam hauled charter trains from London, the Midlands and Bristol, which has the potential to bring up to 600 tourists to Barry in each train."

The turntable, constructed by Cowans Sheldon, was originally saved by the Mid-Hants Railway in the 1970s, but was never installed on the line as no suitable site could be found. Cambrian acquired the turntable from the Mid-Hants Railway last year.

Cambrian took over the custodianship of the Barry Rail Centre in January 2011, on a 20-year lease, from the Vale Council.

John Buxton added: "Since taking control of the site, we have been making steady improvements, operating passenger services, opening a new café as part of our Barry Tourist Railway brand, and working toward infrastructural improvements to the two miles of running line.

"The turntable was always a key part of our business plan, adding not only a useful addition to our own operations, but also, allied to our existing mainline connection, transforming Barry into a railway centre of national importance."

The survey work undertaken has identified that a site at the rear of Barry Rail Centre's New Works Building is most suitable.

The location is conveniently close to Barry Rail Centre's mainline connection. The scheme is now being developed to detailed design stage.

Project combats rural isolation

A NEW service aims to work with individuals and communities to help overcome rural isolation among the over-50s in the Vale.

'Rural Connections" is managed by Age Concern Cardiff and the Vale, and is part of a larger project known as the Friendly AdvantAGE project, led by another voluntary sector organisation, The Vale Centre for Voluntary Services.

Following an audit of gaps in services that tackled loneliness and isolation, a successful application was submitted to the Big Lottery (BIG) AdvantAGE programme to develop five new types of befriending projects across Cardiff and the Vale.

Jane Platts, 'Rural Connections' co-ordinator, explained that there has been shown to be a serious problem with isolation, especially with the over-50s in the rural Vale.

Initially focusing on St Brides, Ogmore-by-Sea and Colwinston, Jane will be working with people to establish befriending support and helping people to have the confidence to make friendships.

The project will run for four years. For further information on this and the AdvantAGE Project, contact Jane on 01446 795631.

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Out and About with The GEM

Vale MP to tackle London Marathon for Vale charities

The MP in training!

THE Vale MP, Alun Cairns, is in training for the Virgin London Marathon 2012 next month – to raise money for two charities in the Vale.

He aims to complete the course to support Barry-based Atal y Fro (formerly known as Women's Aid) and MIND in the Vale.

Mr Cairns, who will be one of six MPs taking part, explained: "I have worked with both these charities over the last two years and they are leading the field in helping people to gain their self-respect and confidence.

"The money I raise by completing the London Marathon will go towards supporting the services offered at the Tynewydd Centre in Barry for MIND in the Vale.

"It will also ensure that many more women and families affected by domestic abuse are helped by the dedicated team at Atal y Fro."

To sponsor the MP and support Atal y Fro and MIND in the Vale, log onto www.virginmoneygiving.com/alun-cairnsmp. Donations can also be taken to, and sponsorship forms completed at the constituency office at 29 High Street, Barry.

The balloons are ready to be released.

Eyes peeled for fallen tags!

DID GEM readers notice a display of 200 red balloons in the sky across Barry recently?

To raise money for the charity of the year, BIBIC (British Institute of Brain Injured Children), Little Inspirations Day Nursery in Barry held a balloon release on February 24.

The parents, staff and workers at the Barry Community Enterprise Centre all purchased balloons prior to the day and £200 is being donated to BIBIC for this event.

So far, the company has raised £2,400 through a spiritualist night, a Hawaiian-themed summer fair and a Christmas fete.

Look out for the balloon tags far and wide, as the balloon that travels the furthest will win a prize! Contact 01443 222660 if you find one.

Little Inspirations would like to thank all of the parents for their continued support during charity events. **HH**

What's on, and where?

Aviation talk

THE 'Danish Flymuseum' – Stauning Aircraft Museum – will be the subject of an illustrated talk by Mr John Wilmot to members of Penarth Aviation Society tomorrow (Friday, March 2).

The society meets on the first Friday of every month at Penarth Conservative Club, 7.45 for 8pm. Visitors welcome.

Further information from David Ephraim on 01446 721321.

PTA quiz

COWBRIDGE Comprehensive PTA hold a quiz and curry night, on Friday, March 2, at 7pm in the school.

Last few seats remaining for this popular fundraiser! Tickets available from the school reception, Xantippe on the High St, or from Mandy Terry; mandyterry@aol.com, 07979 148 8939.

Fairtrade sale

TO mark Fairtrade Fortnight, Noah's Place Fairtrade Cafe, Westgate, Cowbridge, is holding a Fairtrade crafts and goods sale on Saturday, March 3, from 10.30am. Refreshments will be available.

Hot off the griddle!

FREE Welsh cakes, hot off the griddle, will be served up at Cowbridge Farmers' Market, this Saturday (March 3) to celebrate St David's Day.

Whipping up the ingredients will be chairperson of Vale Farmers' Market; Vicky Lewis of Lewis Fine foods.

Locally-produced beef, pork, lamb, chicken, fish, venison, vegetables, jams, chutneys, breads and cakes are among the regular delights, and new member Stephanie Lashford has her own range of allergy-free foods.

The Farmers' Market will be in the Arthur John car park parallel to the High Street, from 9am to 1pm.

Rhoose ward surgery

COUNCILLORS Jeff James and Gordon Kemp will be holding one of their regular advice surgeries on Saturday, March 3, at 10am to 12 noon in the Rhoose Community Hall, Stewart Road, Rhoose (side entrance).

No appointment is necessary and all ward residents are welcome.

Oceanlight Exhibition

ADRIAN Paul Metcalfe's new art exhibition, Oceanlight, offers a chance to explore oceans inspired by extraordinary journeys when it comes to The Old Hall, Cowbridge, on March 3-5.

Oceanlight is a new exhibition of recent work by Adrian Paul Metcalfe, who, whilst based in Wales, has exhibited nationally and internationally for over 30 years.

The exhibition includes oil and watercolour paintings and screen prints.

Admission is free.

Latest U3A lecture

RECENTLY, Cowbridge U3A enjoyed a fascinating and interesting talk by Sara Huws on the rebuilding of St Teilo's Church at St Fagans Museum.

It combined technology, archaeology, medieval beliefs and under floor heating (not Roman but latest technology!).

On Wednesday, March 14, there will be a talk by Glyn Evans on 'What's in a Name?' – car names!

The venue will be Cowbridge Rugby Club

PODS' play

PENARTH Operatic & Democratic Society (PODS) will present Terrence Rattigan's *Flare Path* at The Paget Rooms, Penarth from March 14-17 at 7.30pm.

Tickets available at the Tenovus Cancer Charity Shop, 23 Windsor Road, Penarth (Tel: 02920 708668) or from the Ticket Secretary Brian Gardner (02920 712260).

Penarth talk

THE social justice committee of Penarth and District Cytun (Churches Together) is holding a public meeting on Thursday, March 15 in All Saints Lesser Hall, Victoria Square.

Dr John Weaver will be speaking on 'The Christian Response to Millennium Goals' at 7.30pm. Admission free

Samaritans recruit

THE Bridgend Samaritans will hold an open day/selection on Saturday, March 17 from 9.45am-1pm at 2 Green Street, Bridgend.

To attend the selection day, telephone 01656 662333, or email bridgendselection@gmail.com.

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Sully group's Penarth show

FOR the first time in more than 30 years, Sully Painting Group is holding an exhibition in Penarth – at the Washington Gallery from March 2-16, with a private view being opened by Vaughan Gething AM, tomorrow (March 2).

Members of the group are amateur painters from Rhoose, Dinas Powys and Barry, as well as Sully and Penarth.

They are well known for their annual charity fundraising exhibition in Sully during June.

The paintings to be on display are of a very high standard, and include all types of media.

We extend a warm welcome to everyone to come to the exhibition.

If you would like to paint, why not come and join the group? We meet in Sully on Tuesday afternoons and evenings and are always happy to welcome new members, whether they have painted before or not.

Our usual summer exhibition will still be held in the Jubilee Hall at Sully in June.

RA

Ty Hafan lottery draw winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D711.

£2,000: 320651.

The rollover, which now stands at £5,000, was not won this week.

£10: 320651, 551384, 175563, 193147, 516035, 110311, 304712, 582795, 274693, 384600, 743665, 481283, 445305, 641138, 178704, 313481, 642179, 124852, 523733, 677532, 261277.

£5: 321544, 862145, 391974, 535003, 534584, 790964, 821901, 835268, 439563, 356246, 229181, 703151, 491313, 286604, 711873, 505299, 140509, 282424, 769839, 520518, 297665, 353618, 283133, 294008, 516596, 714734, 914380, 653342, 838032, 772064, 491480, 436588, 508948, 991332, 277764, 652336, 601340, 142065, 173306, 245946, 796113, 881544, 270378, 309068, 284434, 551126, 511541, 246567, 101840, 878101, 445729, 998918, 106139, 806319, 538184, 731048, 570596, 518028, 654002, 852592.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please call telephone 02920 672062.

Tour of historic churches in the Black Mountains

TWELVE members of the Vale of Glamorgan Ramblers travelled to the Black Mountains in the Brecon Beacons National Park, for a walk from Cwmyoy, north of Abergavenny.

We had been warned that the start of the walk was steeply uphill. Steep was the word, and a great way to warm up the walking muscles.

From the lane to the south, there were superb views of Skirrid Fawr and, in the distance, Sugar Loaf Mountain.

The weather was perfect with clear sunshine and it stayed that way all day.

After walking along the ridge above the Gwryne Fawr valley, the group descended down to Pontyspig and then via fields to Partrishow.

Lunch was eaten at the beautiful church of Merthyr Issui at Patricio; with its medieval wall paintings and 16th century carved oak rood screen.

Leaving the church, the walk joined up with the Brecon Way across the valley and then climbed back onto the ridge via an isolated Methodist chapel above the ford at Ty-y-n-Pant.

From there, the group descended into the Llanthony valley through Coed Robin, then past the refurbished Neuadd farmhouse.

The walk ended by returning through Cwmyoy village and the third of the churches – St Martin Cwmyoy.

More details of our walks are available at www.valeofglamorgan-ramblers.co.uk. Also, follow us on our Facebook page – Vale of Glamorgan Ramblers.

LEIGH FORMAN

Pupils raise funds for Hari

ON Friday January 20, class 9GE at Bryn Hafren School, Barry, held a cake break for Hari's First Steps.

The charity is to help raise money for Hari from Neath to have a life changing operation in America that will help him walk unaided.

9GE made and bought cakes, biscuits and sweets to sell. There was also a name the giant teddy competition and a raffle.

They raised £122.90 for Hari's First Steps, and wrote a letter which was given to Hari's family with the cheque.

Advice at Senior health shop

THE Castleland Communities First co-ordinator will be available at The Senior Health Shop, Holton Road, Barry, on Tuesday March 6, from 10am-12 noon, to answer questions on the project.

Contact 01446 732385 for further details.

Cardiff and Vale hospital discharge representatives will be available at Age Concern Senior Health Shop on March 8, to answer questions and give advice from 10am-12 noon.

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The No 1 Welsh Wing Air Cadets on parade (see story on right).

Barry's Air Cadets join the St Athan anniversary parade

The Squadron, busy with their basketball training.

RECENTLY, 16 Air Cadets from 372 (Barry) Squadron attended a parade with 300 others from No 1 Welsh Wing, at MoD StAthan, to celebrate the 71st anniversary of the Air Training Corps (ATC).

The day began with the 300 Air Cadets in a formal parade and they were inspected by the reviewing officer, Wing Commander Paul Regan (station commander).

Wing Commander Ken Pudney (Officer Commanding No.1 Welsh Wing) spoke of his pride in the Cadets and the parade was followed by a church service where Cadets learnt about the history of the ATC and the RAF..

The Cadets then took part in a variety of activities including archery, shooting the No 8 rifle, orienteering, field craft, archery, gliding and sports, including basketball, circuits, badminton and football.

They also had visits from the station ambulance and fire services personnel. Cadet Gareth Messer said: "I have really enjoyed today, especially the sports and archery.

"I am looking forward to the parade and activities day again next year."

The Cadets who took part were: Carl Chaplin, Megan Hamblin, Geraint Andrews, Bethan Williams, Rachel Carbis, Bethan Hopkins, Gareth Messer, Steph Jones, Ellie Jones, Jack Cowles, Keiren Long, Nathan Loxton, Jake Patterson, and John Poulakis,

If you have a spirit for adventure, 372 Squadron has vacancies for boys and girls between 13-18 years old.

The Squadron parade on Mondays and Wednesdays from 7pm-9.30pm behind Adams Funeral Parlour (by the Memorial Hall); contact 01446 747734 or email: 372@aircadets.org for more information.

'LEISURE VENTURE: WHY THE SECRECY?'

I READ with interest in last week's GEM of the grand opening of the Vale Council's latest leisure venture, the Adizone outdoor gym, built at a cost of more than £250,000.

I also read a few weeks ago, of the council's £300,000 spend on Barry Leisure Centre, and £100,000 on Holm View Leisure Centre for improvements and repairs.

These massive sums were all drawn from Barry Regeneration, and Section 106 funding, which is, essentially, the local public purse.

However, I now understand that this week, the cabinet are to announce that all of the Vale's leisure centres are to be run with a commercial operator Parkwood Leisure Ltd for the next 10 years at least – and, as part of the deal, the council is also intending to put in another £2 or £3 million extra for further repairs to the centres.

If this turns out to be the case, can somebody please tell me why such vast public sector funds have been, and still intend to be, ploughed in to these centres, and why the new commercial operator, whose aim is to make a profit for shareholders, cannot fund these improvements themselves.

Can somebody also please tell me why is there a lack of transparency with the public yet again, why there is a need to discuss this matter behind closed doors, and what impact this deal will have on assets held, services offered, admission prices, and, most importantly, workers' jobs?

JONATHAN OSBORNE, (*FocusBARRY supporter*)

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Barrivale results

THE latest results from Barrivale Bridge Club are as follows:

1st Denis Mottram and Mick Green 67.46 per cent.

2nd Kay Dyer and Diana Kendrick 55.56 per cent.

3rd Alan Jones and Lyn Matthews 52.78 per cent. Kay and Diana won on handicap.

New members are always welcome at Barrivale. Telephone 01446 733425 or call at the Pioneer Hall, Beryl Road Barry on Tuesdays at 7 pm.

Mike Bond

Glamorgan Law expands in Cowbridge

LARBY WILLIAMS of Cowbridge is the latest firm to add its weight behind the increasingly prominent force on the South Wales legal scene that is Glamorgan Law.

In 2010, Peter Davies Solicitors of Park Place, Cardiff, a niche litigation firm, joined forces with high street practice, James & Bulteel of Cardiff and Pontypridd and with Beech & Co, commercial property and business law specialists based in Cowbridge, under the Glamorgan Law banner.

Announcing its latest merger with Larby Williams, Glamorgan Law's Senior Partner, Peter Davies, said: "We have created a firm capable of providing a comprehensive service to both businesses and individuals from local offices throughout the South Wales region.

"We are building a brand known for high quality client care and technical excellence.

"Our aim is to serve those clients who want personal service from excellent, highly trained solicitors and the security of high quality at a fair and competitive price."

Mr Davies continued: "We will be celebrating our merger with Larby Williams on St David's Day and I am delighted that they have decided to join forces with our Cowbridge office.

"Larby Williams has built an excellent reputation for quality and client care and shares our values and aims. The merger provides us with a greater range of expertise in Cowbridge, including agricultural law, family law, trusts, wills, tax and probate to add to our traditional strengths in commercial property, business law and dispute resolution."

The Partner in charge of the new Glamorgan Law Cowbridge office, Richard Beech, commented: "The recent economic climate has been difficult for everyone, including lawyers. I am pleased to say that Glamorgan Law is coming through this difficult period very strongly, though I am aware that there have been many firms badly hit by the downturn.

"The Larby Williams merger greatly adds to our range of technical expertise in Cowbridge, more than doubles our numbers and provides us with high profile offices on the High Street. I am very confident that the values and people of the two firms will blend brilliantly! I am relishing the challenge ahead with my new team."

Adrian Larby who, with colleague Pamela Haines and their teams joins Glamorgan Law said: "This is great news for us, for the clients of Larby Williams and, indeed, for everyone needing legal services in the Vale of Glamorgan".

glamorganlaw

Glamorgan Law

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For further information contact Richard Beech at:
richard@glamorganlaw.co.uk

www.glamlaw.co.uk

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VALE MP's VIEWPOINT

LDP – our chance to call for changes

Vale MP Alun Cairns reports to GEM readers

AS I'm sure GEM readers are aware, the draft Local Development Plan (LDP) has now been accepted and published by the Vale of Glamorgan Council to go through the formal consultation process.

These draft plans follow a formal process for planning requirements laid out by the Welsh Government, and will form the basis for all planning decisions in the Vale for the next 15 years.

The commencement date for this formal six-week consultation began on February 20 and closes on April 2.

After the consultation period, the council will consider all the views and comments received from residents, businesses and stakeholders and make adjustments to the LDP accordingly.

It is vital that the local authority know your strength of feeling on the LDP within this six-week period.

Although this is only the first stage of the LDP process, it is extremely important because ultimately the deciding body on all matters planning – the Welsh Government – will be taking into account the views discussed and raised at this stage of the process.

The local authority will then present this adjusted document to the Welsh Government whose Inspector may choose to make further amends in making his/her judgement on the plan.

The Inspector will be looking at the objections made now and will judge all proposals according to the Wales Planning Policy document.

At this stage, the Inspector is likely to hold a formal planning inquiry, where people will be able to give further evidence in person, or in writing.

We also need to remember that landowners and developers will be pressing to extend developments or will ask to include land not already allocated.

In view of the potential return, they are highly likely to use professional planners and barristers for such purposes.

In order to combat such expertise, it is essential that as many as possible express their concerns which should be based on planning reasons and principles. The planners and, ultimately, the Inspector will consider a broad range of matters in relation to the LDP, which will include variables such as the local housing demand (if any) and the number of pupils attending the local school.

It}s pertinent to note at this point, that schools of less than 100 pupils can often come under threat of closure under Welsh Government guidance.

Similarly, a lack of space in local schools for additional pupil places can be a material factor within a planning context.

I have already met with several community groups regarding their concerns about proposed residential, traveller and business park development locations in the Vale – from Barry, Wick, Llangan and Rhoose.

As I am not a member of the local authority, I can only bring matters to their attention for their judgement, but will do all I can to ensure your voice is heard.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the situation in England is very different.

The Localism Act puts the decision-making in the hands of the community.

Unfortunately, the Welsh Government chose not to follow this policy and to establish the LDP process instead.

I hope that over time we will be allowed the same privilege as communities in England.

Iolo pupils put on a concert!

YSGOL Iolo Morgannwg is holding a concert on March 8, at 6.30pm, to raise funds for the Welsh National Eisteddfod, which being held in the Vale later this year.

Contact the school on 01446 772358 for tickets – priced £5 for adults, with free admission for children.

RIGHT: Children proudlyhold up Welsh flag in preparation for the school s Eisteddfod concert

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For the second year in a row, pupils at Christ College witnessed a galaxy of stars as they celebrated the best ever haul of top A* grades at the school. Top grades were also awarded to the school last year when Christ College was awarded the best possible inspection results by Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education & Training in Wales. In its report, the Estyn inspection team judged Christ College to be 'Excellent' in all areas that it assessed and identified significant examples of sector-leading practice.

The report recognised the high standards achieved at Christ College and the quality of provision and support provided to achieve these standards as the inspectors observed 'Pupils of all ages make very good progress and achieve particularly high standards in public examinations at keys stage 4 and post-16'. Head Emma Taylor said: 'We know that academic results open doors, so we are committed to helping every individual maximise their achievement in this area.

The 2010/11 Upper Sixth continued the run of outstanding A level results with 18% of all A level grades achieving the challenging A* top grade. These A level results were amongst some of the best ever seen here with 77% of all grades achieving the top A*-B grade. The GCSE results were equally impressive with the best ever haul of top A* grades at the school as one in three of all entries was awarded the A* grade. This is the second year in succession at the college when more than 50% of all grades have been at A or A* level. It's no surprise therefore that Estyn observed that 'pupils are extremely well motivated, show high levels of self-discipline and are very effective independent learners.'

One feature that was particularly pleasing to the school was the observation that Christ College's 'extensive and enriching extra-curricular activities programme contributes significantly to pupils' personal and social development and their academic progress'. This acknowledges that we teach well beyond and around the narrow requirements of examinations, and believe that education takes place everywhere a pupil goes and not just in the classroom. The high pupil participation rates in the DofE Award Scheme, the extremely popular Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and our pupils' successes in the sporting, music and drama arenas are evidence of this.

To register for our Open Morning on the 24th March, please contact Mrs Stephens on 01874 615440 or via admissions@christcollegebrecon.com

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More than 40 years of

Local choir has plenty to sing about after more than 40 years

by PHILIP IRWIN

WHEN you stop and think about it, Cowbridge is hardly in the heartland of 'Cor Meibion' – the Welsh Male Voice Choir tradition.

Such choirs will always be associated with the twin influences on life in the Welsh Valleys – coal mining and the numerous chapels and churches that are a hallmark of life in communities such as Treorchy or Morriston.

The leafy Vale of Glamorgan, with its primarily rural employment patterns, was always going to be different.

There were no places where hundreds of men (as it then was) worked together. If choirs sprang, in part, from communal singing in the pit head baths, then Cowbridge was doomed to miss out.

In fact, that was also the opinion of Keith Brown, one of the choir's founders!

Keith explained: "When I lived in London I was friendly with Meic Edwards. We weren't choir members, all we would get involved in was a sing-song in a pub.

"I moved back to Cowbridge and later, when Meic moved back, he got in touch and said why don't we form a choir?

"I said that it wouldn't take off in an area like Cowbridge, but Meic was persistent. So the two of us, along with Bob Whittaker, distributed leaflets and asked anyone interested to come to a meeting at the Eastgate Hotel."

That initial meeting was attended by about 15, but Meic was proved right in a pretty short period of time, as more choristers came forward.

Numbers have been as high as 85, and even now, when some choirs are struggling, the Cowbridge Male Voice Choir still has 65 choristers.

Apart from the aforementioned founders, there are two other members of the choir today – Glyn Jones and Gwyn Jones – who can claim to have been there for the first rehearsals, the first pubic performance in 1971, and the following 41 years.

Glyn Jones told The GEM: "Meic, Keith and Bob put out a leaflet and I remember there were around 15 at that first meeting. It wasn't long before we had around 30 rehearsing regularly, and we started to plan for our first performance.

"I think the first song we rehearsed was 'Michael Row the Boat Ashore'."

That first performance came on June 10, 1971, in 'Cowbridge Week, in the town hall, and for that evening's entertainment, the choir shared the stage with the Cowbridge Amateur Dramatic Society (CADS).

CADS performed a series of sketches, and then the choir took to the stage, with a pretty traditional male voice choir repertoire.

Cowbridge Male Voice Choir pictured outside the Millennium Centre and in front of the impressive mirrored water tower (Cardiff - 10th May, 2008)

By now, the late David Richards had been appointed as musical director – a post that he filled for about eight years.

Among the songs performed that night were; 'Ar Hyd yr Nos'; 'Speed Your Journey' and the Red Army Choir favourite, 'Kalinka'.

The accompanist for that first performance was a very young Sandra Thomas who now, under her married name of Sandra Williams, is still accompanying the choir.

Sandra can't quite boast 41 unbroken years of service, but she is so close that it makes little difference!

During the 1970s, the young choir grew quickly in reputation and confidence, appearing alongside the renowned Parc and Dare Brass Band in a series of concerts, and appearing in an HTV series, *Corau Meibion*.

They also performed at the Royal Albert Hall, together with Dame Vera Lynn and Larry Adler at the reunion of the Burma Star Association.

It was in 1979 that the choir took on its biggest challenge so far – touring Saskatchewon in Canada – where temperatures were 30 below zero!

By now, Iwan Guy was the musical director, and the choir accepted an itinerary of 17 performances in 16 days!

Glyn Jones remembered: "Barry Male Voice Choir had been going to tour but they offered it to us. In the end, a number of Barry choristers joined us on the trip.

"I do remember the fantastic response we received from audiences. Some people had driven 200 miles to see us."

Through the 1980 and 1990s, the choir continued to tour and develop its repertoire.

Members sang in North America and throughout Europe, and the choir also welcomed touring ensembles from overseas, sharing the stage with them in a series of concerts back home in south Wales.

In 1985, the baton was passed on once again, with Shelley Thomas-Brown taking over as musical director – a post she holds to this day.

She and Sandra Williams have been director and accompanist for more than 25 years now.

Shelley combines leading the choir with the post of head of music at Maesteg Comprehensive School, where the school has a strong musical tradition, while Sandra has now retired from her post as a primary school teacher, specialising in Welsh and music.

Sandra also plays the church organ in the historic village of St Hilary.

Cowbridge Male Voice Choir in their latest 'uniform' – green blazers.

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Cowbridge Male Voice Choir

Happy St David's Day

The key posts in this male voice choir are held by women, and the third is that of honorary president, where the renowned soprano, Iona Jones, has been in post since 2005.

In August 2000, she crowned her competitive career by winning the prestigious David Ellis Memorial Prize at the national Eisteddfod in Llanelli.

Iona has toured extensively as a soloist, appearing at both the Sydney Opera House and at Carnegie Hall, New York. In 1995, she was guest soloist for Cowbridge Male Voice Choir's silver jubilee tour of Ontario.

CHARITY WORK

The choir has always been delighted to help charities at home and abroad, and a long list of good causes who have benefited from funds raised at concerts include: Noah's Ark Appeal; Save the Children; Barnardo's; the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford; Leukaemia Research; and NCH Action for Children.

The choir draws its members from around the Vale these days, with some from Bridgend and Pontyclun, it stands at an impressive 65.

However, as the choir's secretary, Tom Carnduff, said: "We are always on the lookout for new members, so men who live in the area and who enjoy singing are welcome to join us at a rehearsal.

"We rehearse in Holy Cross Church. Cowbridge, on Wednesdays, 7.30pm to 9.30pm, except in school holiday periods."

ABOVE: It's 1985, and Shelly Thomas-Brown has just taken the rains as Musical Director

ABOVE: The very first performance of the choir, in June 1971, in Cowbridge Town Hall

Dydd Gŵyl Dewi Sant hapus

NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME

More information can be obtained from Tom Carnduff on **01446 794092** on e-mail, ***secretary.cmvc@gmail.com*** or by visiting the website: ***www.cmvc.org.uk***

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ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

Entrepreneur spirit is alive and well, as local companies keep the economy on the move!

BUSINESS parks and industrial estates play a big part in the economy these days, and the Vale Business Park is no exception.

What you can say with some certainty is that most of the businesses that operate there are the type of local entrepreneur that the Government hopes will revive the economy by reacting quickly to business opportunities.

SMEs – Small and Medium Size Enterprises – are key to future employment prospects and, as such, they play a big part in the economic life of the Vale.

Business parks are by no means 'trade only' these days, so it pays to check out what's on offer from a wide variety of local businesses!

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Glamorgan Farmers' Golf Society holds annual presentation evening

THE annual presentation of awards ceremony for members of the Glamorgan Farmers' Golf Society was held recently at The Heronston Hotel, Bridgend.

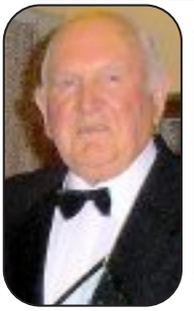
The highlight of the evening came when master of ceremonies David Harris announced the result of the 'President's Putter' which was won by Society President Geraint Davies.

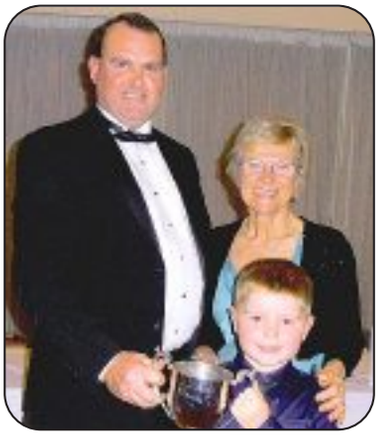
This award, which is based on the highest aggregate over eight society meetings, resulted in Geraint accumulating 260 points just one more than runner up Neil McLean, who until the final meeting of the season at Swansea Bay, was leading by three points.

The society was particularly pleased that Geraint's three sisters Eirios, Eionwy and Ydwena, together with daughter Amy and other members of his family, were present to witness this memorable occasion.

RESULTS FOR THE YEAR

February - Martin David with 38 points at Southerndown; March - Bryan Wadham 34 points at The Glamorganshire; April - Geraint Davies 35 points at Cradoc; May - David Williams 28 points at Fairwood Park; June - John Caines 33 points at Bowood Park; July - Keith James and Geraint Davies with 39 points at The Grove; Aug - Trevor Wooding 27 points at The Wales National; September - Geraint Davies 33 points at Morlais Castle; October - John Davies 33 points at Newport, Rogerstone; November - Martin David 40 points at Whitchurch, Cardiff; December - Neil McLean 37 points at R A F St Athan; January - Geraint Davies 34 points at Swansea Bay **TM**





Project aims to capture the heart of Vale village

LOCAL artist Sol Jorgensen is asking local people to bring history in Wick to life.

'Living Wick' is a project to collate and document old photos and stories, past and present, about the Village. Sol said: "It is about celebrating our village life and heritage.

"Living Wick is a chance to say what it is that you and your relatives like or love about Wick.

"It might be the big sky so unseen in a city. It might be the birds that flock here. It might be knowing your neighbour and looking after them, as they look after you.

"It might be memories of past events, school life, community success and celebrations. We want to capture it all."

In conjunction with Wick Fete Committee, the 'Living Wick' project will be launched at the Welsh Evening event tomorrow (March 2) in the Wick and Monknash Village Hall.

Sol added: "'Living Wick' will initially arrive through your postbox as postcards for you to say, quite simply, your best memory or feeling about our village.

"Together we can make a vision, something that is seen, about our unique heritage here in Wales."

For more information, contact Carol Brown at Wick Community Council (01656 890124).

Ellie needs help for vital operation

A young family are urgently trying to raise funds to send their two-year-old daughter over to the USA for surgery to repair nerve damage caused by a birth defect.

The operation is available only in the States and costs £40,000.

Ellie Jury, who was born in July 2009, was diagnosed with Spastic Diplegia.

Her mother Lucy, of Pencoed, explained: "It affects her from the waist down and makes it difficult for her to stand properly and walk more than a few steps.

"It also makes it hard for her to enjoy activities that her friends do."

"A US neuro-surgeon has performed the operation 2,100 times with a 100 per cent success rate.

"It helps children like Ellie lead a normal and fulfilling life. The aim of the operation is to reduce the spasticity in her legs."

One event to help Ellie takes place this weekend, Sunday, March 4 when a sponsored walk takes place in Bute Park, Cardiff, starting at 10am.

If anyonewould like to help Ellie, or get involved in fundraising events, they can contact Lucy on 07712 687 187; email: elliesgoody2feet@yahoo.co.uk; or go to Facebook and: elliesgoody2feet.

An appeal has been made to the Bridgend community to help raise funds so Ellie can have a vital £40,000 operation

Put on your 'thinking caps' for NSPCC on St David's Day

LOCAL people are being encouraged to put on their thinking caps, just like Sherlock Holmes, at a quiz night to raise money for local vulnerable and abused children.

Contestants will be welcomed by regular quiz master Terry Dennis, to the Bush Inn, St Hilary – which recently doubled as The Cross Keys pub in the latest series of BBC One's Sherlock.

The St David's Day themed quiz will take place on Sunday (March 4) at 8pm and entry is £1 per person, with all proceeds going to support the work of the NSPCC

Chairman of the Cardiff and District branch of the NSPCC, Fiona Curteis, said: "We're grateful to Andy and Liz for holding this quiz in the wonderful Bush Inn, St Hilary. We really hope that people will come along and test their knowledge!"

NSPCC community fundraising manager for the Vale of Glamorgan, Jo Leonard, said: "The money raised from the quiz night will help to support vital NSPCC services, such as ChildLine, as well as therapeutic services for children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse, projects that support families, and domestic abuse services.

"None of these would be possible without the continued generosity of donors, fundraisers and supporters."

For further information, contact Jo Leonard on 01446 795404, or email jleonard@nspcc.org.uk

WASHINGTON FILM 'A THRILLING RIDE BUT ALL TOO FAMILIAR'

Action blockbuster delivers oomph in spite of predictable plot twists

SCREEN TALK

by GARETH JAMIESON

Follow Screen Talk on Twitter - @GEMScreenTalk

FOR one of the most revered actors of his generation, Denzel Washington has never been afraid to walk on the path of the blockbuster.

His appearances in the likes of *Unstoppable* and *Man On Fire* have offset his more dramatic choices, the actor bringing gravitas to even the most vacuous of movies.

He finds himself alongside Ryan Reynolds in *Safe House*, where Washington plays Tobin Frost, a rogue CIA agent who is caught and interrogated in the titular safe house in Johannesburg looked after by Matt Weston (Reynolds); but when the house is compromised by people hunting down Frost, Weston must go on the run with him in order to keep him under arrest and prevent him falling into the wrong hands...

If you read the plot summary above and thought "not again", then you wouldn't be alone; originality most certainly isn't one of *Safe House*'s strong points.

But beyond its clichéd genre origins is a film that makes for a thrilling ride, albeit one that is more than familiar.

It certainly isn't an acting stretch for Denzel Washington, whose performance rarely breaks out of second gear, but whose charisma more than pulls him through.

Frost is the sort of character that Washington could essay in his sleep, all quiet stoicism and more than meets the eye in terms of his true motivations, but Washington gives the character depth so that you can't help but be drawn into his story.

Ryan Reynolds is arguably more impressive as the rookie agent with a point to prove – and who has to prove it in the most extreme circumstances possible.

Reynolds showed in the impressive *Buried* that he is maturing into an actor of some renown, and here he takes the material and gives it a feeling of substance, the character richly portrayed by the actor. He perfectly conveys the fact that Weston is going up the proverbial creek by trying to handle Frost, and Reynolds' turn is a lot better than the material demands.

There are decent performances from Brendan Gleeson (shady), Vera Farmiga (underused) and Sam Shepard (grizzled) as CIA higher-ups who may or may not be hiding secrets, the quality of the cast again covering up the predictability of the material.

Daniel Espinosa's Hollywood debut as director is a fairly decent one, marrying the machinations of the story to some hard-hitting action sequences of note, including a propulsive and highly impressive car chase through the streets of South Africa.

There is more than a nod to Tony Scott's directorial style in the way Espinosa lenses the film, grainy film stock and different shades feeling familiar but lacking Scott's kinetic editing style, but Espinosa opts for finesse over stylistics and it pays dividends.

While the script, by David Guggenheim, throws plenty of intrigue into its near-two-hour running time, there is far too much that feels familiar, the story arc unfolding almost as a checklist while the beats of the narrative can be heard and seen a mile off; there is no attempt to transcend the clichés into something different, and though it almost embraces them willingly, it is far too straightforward to truly impact and live long in the memory.

Ultimately that is *Safe House*'s largest shortcoming – that no matter how fresh and exhilarating Daniel Espinosa's direction tries to be, it is undone by the film's seen-it-all-before nature.

There are no surprises on show, no sudden twists or turns that you can't see coming, and though it makes for a solid and entertaining watch, you won't feel too much about it once the lights come on.

***VERDICT** – A typical genre film enlivened by Daniel Espinosa's direction and two good turns from Denzel Washington and Ryan Reynolds, Safe House doesn't pull up any trees or deliver any surprises; but it still makes for an entertaining watch, and as brainless entertainment it certainly achieves its aims, but little more. Enjoyable.*

***SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED:** Man On Fire (2004), Spy Game (2001)*

VOLUNTEERS' SERVICE IS RECOGNISED

VALE AM Jane Hutt was on hand at the Cardiff and Vale Credit Union AGM in th Vale Civic Offices on February 22 to congratulate Mike Watkins and Jean Smith on more than 5,000 hours of voluntary work given to the body.

Chaired by Alun Taylor, there was an update on improvements in the Credit Union service, including a quicker assessment for loans to members within 24 hours.

Ms Hutt AM said: "If you would like to find out more about the Credit Union and how you can become a member, why not call in to see the volunteers at the Civic Offices in Barry every Monday between 10am-1pm or at Barry Library in Kings Square every Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 1pm?"

Jane Hutt AM with Credit Union volunteers Mike Watkins and Jean Smith.

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The Best Kept Village Competition committee rings the changes in the Queen's Jubilee year

THE Best Kept Village competition in the Vale was established in 1953, as part of the Vale's celebrations for the Queen's Coronation.

The competition was started by local businessman and philanthropist, D C Jones, who owned a department store in Barry. He donated a superb gilded silver cup for the competition, to be presented each year to the winning village.

The Cup is still presented annually, but has become simply a silver Cup since zealous cleaning by villagers each year has removed all the external gold coating!

As we celebrate the Queen's diamond jubilee this year, the committee hopes to make it a special year with as many villages taking part in the competition as possible. It could even be combined with the '*plant a Jubilee tree*' campaign.

Basil praised!

LONG-STANDING committee member, associated with the competition for nearly 40 years and chairman for the past 21, Col Basil Watkins, confirmed at the committee's AGM in January that he was standing down.

The committee were unanimous in saying how much his long experience with the competition would be missed and in thanking him for his huge contribution to the competition over a great many years.

In gratitude for his contribution to the competition, the Vale of Glamorgan presented him with a special commemorative glass paperweight. (See photograph of the Mayor of the Vale presenting Col Watkins with the paper weight).

Following the chairman's retirement, an election took place and Mr Richard Skinner, past secretary, was elected as the new Chairman and his old job was filled by Mrs Carole Alexander, who has worked for the Vale Council for 20 years.

The new chairman thanked Col Watkins for his valued long service and admitted it would be a hard act to follow. He was also extremely pleased to welcome Carole onto the committee as secretary and felt that we were fortunate indeed to have secured her services. (See photo of the new chairman, secretary and the outgoing chairman).

Special year

2012 is going to be special year for several reasons; the Queen's jubilee, the Olympics and the Eisteddfod in the Vale in August.

The new chairman would like more villages to pull out the stops and enter the competition this year, thus improving the neat and tidy look of the Vale and enhancing local community spirit.

He makes an especial plea to lapsed, past entry villages such as; Colwinston, Flemingston, Pendoylan, Peterston-super-Ely and Wick to form community action groups and join the competition again; also we would encourage participation by new villages such as Graig Penllyn and Treoes entering.

If nothing else, the competition generates good community spirit and improves the environment: ideal in this the Jubilee and Vale Eisteddfod year.

The new secretary will be contacting all Community Councils with entry forms in due course, but an early year's resolution to join in is ideal to set the ball rolling.

The competition is all about "best kept" and not picture post card perfect type villages. Small as well as large villages can enter and do equally well. Michaelston-le-Pit won last year, but large villages such as Wenvoe have also won within the last four years.

Often the excuse is: "We have lots of building work going on and this spoils the village." The judges can take this into account and can block out any such problems when making their rounds.

So please make it a Jubilee Year resolution to tidy your village and enter the competition! The top five villages win cash prizes which range from £100 up to £500. On top of this, the winning village is also awarded tickets for four for a day at the races, including a meal in the restaurant overlooking the racetrack, thanks to the generosity of the owners of Ffos Las Racecourse.

Our main sponsors are The Vale of Glamorgan Council, Town and Community Councils and Cemex, our thanks go to these benefactors, without them we would be unable to run the competition. Our schools competition receives sponsorship from Dyffryn gardens, to whom we are also greatly indebted, and our special prize of a day at the races comes from Ffos Las Racecourse, to whom we give a big thank you.

Welsh Baccalaureate?

CALLING all secondary school pupils completing the Welsh Baccalaureate!

Two years ago, a year-12 pupil successfully carried out a project which formed the 'Community Element' of their Baccalaureate. Her work was successfully entered as a 'Special Feature' within this competition. We encourage 'Special Feature' entries where a village is unwilling to commit to a whole village entry. Such entries are looked upon as tasters for a potential future full entry. We would love to have more young people taking part in this competition.

A Baccalaureate element could consist of a Special Feature or be part of a whole village entry – plant a tree or two, even! We award prize money for worthwhile feature entries; up to £100 can be won.

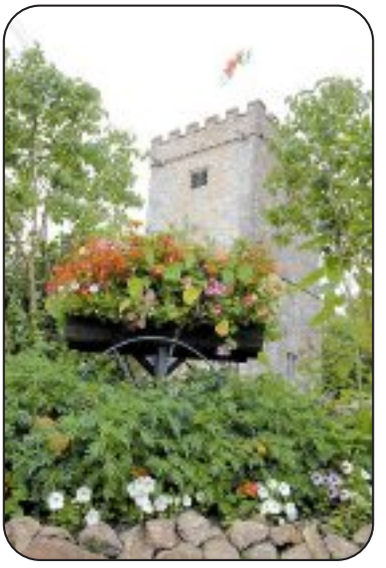
Schools competition

OUR schools competition has over the last few years gone from strength to strength, with 24 entries judged in 2011.

We will again be contacting all primary and nursery schools in the Vale this year for entries. We plan to have our usual 'bun-fight' buffet and winner's announcements at Dyffryn Gardens this July.

RICHARD SKINNER

ABOVE: Wenvoe phone box.



ABOVE: Pendoylan in 2009.

ABOVE: The White Lion, Ystradowen.

Col Basil Watkins with the Vale Mayor.

ABOVE: Y Bont Faen Primary School.

ABOVE: The well at Michaelston.

RIGHT: Ystradowen lay-by.

BELOW: Richard Skinner, Carole Alexander and Basil Watkins.

ABOVE; bus shelter in 2009.

ABOVE: Welsh Baccalaureate entry in 2010.

Council looks for a partner to run its leisure centres

by PHILIP IRWIN

THE Vale Council is considering following neighbouring Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) in letting a private sector partner run its leisure centres.

BCBC is run by Labour, and the council is now at an advanced stage in the change-over, with plans recently announced to invest £4.2 million of private money in Bridgend's main recreation centre.

The Vale Council's cabinet considered a recommendation yesterday (February 29) that the council should appoint Parkwood Leisure Ltd as its "preferred partner" to run its leisure centres.

A Vale Council spokesman said: ""This follows an extensive procurement period, which has involved detailed discussions with four potential bidders.

"If the deal goes ahead, it will mean that, although the leisure centres remain the responsibility of the council, Parkwood will operate the centres for a minimum of 10 years with a possible extension for a further five years."

The BCBC deal with its private sector partners has a similar timescale.

The Vale Council spokeswoman said: "In addition to this, the council will also consider a recommendation that up to £3million be identified for investment in the centres, which will lead to improvements to the buildings themselves and their facilities."

This £3 million investment will come from the Vale Council's funds.

The Vale Council spokeswoman said: "This proposal is good news for the users of the council's leisure centres and for the staff. It will mean that all the existing leisure centres will continue to operate, even though the proposed contract has achieved the savings required. The level of the service is guaranteed for the next 10 years and this will open up real opportunities for improvements to the facilities for the public, and staff career progression."

Coun Anthony Ernest, the cabinet member for tourism and leisure said: "The proposed private sector partner, Parkwood Leisure Ltd, has substantial experience throughout the UK in operating leisure centres, including the Cardiff International Pool.

"I am pleased that, following a lengthy procurement process, their proposal guarantees the future of all the council's leisure centres. Their proposals have a clear focus on the customer, while at the same time offering staff real development opportunities.

"It is pleasing that they have managed to achieve significant savings and this clearly reflects the advantage that such companies have in terms of financial benefits that are not available to the council, including purchasing power in this market, business rate relief and national marketing initiatives."

Vale leisure centres covered by the proposals are as follows: Barry Leisure Centre; Cowbridge Leisure Centre; Llantwit Major Leisure Centre; Penarth Leisure Centre; Holm View Leisure Centre; Colcot Sports Centre (new hall and artificial turf pitch).

Bridgend tax debate

COMMENTS on last week's GEM article about Bridgend County Borough Council's decision to freeze council tax included one from regional AM Suzy Davies.

She said that the Welsh Government, under First Minister Carwyn Jones AM, had let Bridgend down by not passing on all the money that the Westminster Government had released to cut council tax bills.

She argued that key services in the borough could be jeopardised as a result.

Mr Jones' response did not reach The GEM in time to be included in last week's article.

His statement was as follows: *"The decision to freeze council tax will be welcomed right across the borough. The council is to be commended for striking a balance during these difficult financial times, by protecting services and giving council taxpayers real value for money."*

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To book, please contact Rebecca at: members@vwbn.org.uk.

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We also have a knitting club on Wednesday afternoons.

Our patterns suit all the family with plenty of designs for trend setters of any age.

Please call soon at 1 Penny Lane, Cowbridge (or telephone 01446 772055).

La Mercerie
Hand Knitting Yarns for Gentlemen too...
Loopy Can-Can Popular Scarves
Eclectic range of pattern books for women, children & 'curvier' figures.
Hand dyed Yarn from The Old Piggery
Now in Store... Gutermann Sew-all thread
• Wednesday afternoon knitting club! •
Back to basics . . .Wool to touch and feel before you buy!
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Listening, without making judgement

WE all want to be happy, but sometimes life is hard. In counselling, you can reflect on what it is that you feel is wrong and I can help you make decisions which will make life better.

My name is Dahlian Kirby and, when I counsel someone, I listen without judging. You would never be expected to talk about things you don't want to talk about. I will, however, provide structure and may make suggestions for tasks to do in the session, or at home between sessions.

I believe that everyone is able to work towards controlling their lives and making good choices – sometimes we just need support.

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Why worry unnecessarily?
Your solution could be a phone call away!
(For young people & adults)
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• Self-esteem • Depression • Life choices
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info@dahliankirby.com
www.dahliankirby.com

AS ONE DOOR CLOSES, ANOTHER ONE OPENS!

ALL of us at Boverton Garden Centre were sad to lock up our shop in Boverton yesterday for the last time. After 10 years and 11 months of lovely, loyal customers and being part of a close-knit community, we have decided to move back to our Barry premises.

We have thought long and hard with regards to this decision, but due to rising costs, John's retirement (for sure this time!), Ceri's new addition, Toby Ray – along with the opportunity to offer the long standing, excellent staff from Boverton shop jobs in our Barry shop, we felt it was the right time.

We will still be delivering in the Llantwit Major and St Athan area on a Tuesday and Thursday; the delivery charge will remain at £2, but with a minimum order of £10.

We are very passionate about being part of the local communities and are, therefore, starting a new venture – a mobile gardening shop.

We will be calling at various villages, offering a selection of plants, seasonal garden goods, plant feeds, bug killers, etc, along with wild bird feeds.

We would like to thank our customers at both the Boverton and Barry shops for being such loyal customers; we very much appreciate it.

Here's looking forward to a 'happy, busy gardening spring.'

Welcome to Balmoral Motorhome Hire!

WOULD you like to take your home comforts on holiday with you? Go where you and your family want to go – no set meal times or itinerary? Get up and go when you want, where you want!

Balmoral Motorhomes, based in Bridgend, offers a hire service for luxury motorhomes. Find us just off junction 35 of the M4.

A spokesman explained: "We only use new 2012 registered camper vans. We have four or six berth motorhomes now available for that special holiday.

"Fully equipped and insured for drivers over 25 years old, complete with radio/CD, and flat screen TV/DVD player."

For our new 'hire' facility, or for new and used motorhomes or camper vans call 01656 858289, or visit us alongside Nathaniel Car Sales, Bridgend Industrial Estate, CF31 3SA.

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Motorhomes For Hire in Bridgend!
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4 and 6 berths available
Available from March 2012
Bookings being taken now!
Motorhomes for sale from £5995
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visit website for current stock list!
www.balmoralmotorhomes.co.uk
WE BUY MOTORHOMES and CARAVANS - finance cleared

Broad Street Garden Centre
Mobile Garden Shop
Starting 13th March

Route Of Mobile Shop

TUESDAY

10-11.30am	Ham Manor Park, Llantwit Major*
12-1pm	Blacksmiths Arms, Llanmaes
1.30-3pm	Boverton Castle, Boverton
3.30-4pm	Castleton Caravan Park, St Athan

WEDNESDAY

10-11am	TO BE ADVISED
11.30-1pm	Fontygary Inn, Rhoose
1.30-2.30pm	Six Bells, Penmark
3-4pm	TO BE ADVISED

THURSDAY

10-11pm	Fox and Hounds, Llancarfan
11.30-12.30pm	Red Lion, Bonvilston
1-2pm	Red Lion, Pendoylan
2.30-4pm	Three Horseshoes, Peterston-super-Ely

* Residents only

We will be looking to do the above routes on a weekly basis.

Thank you to all pubs/caravan parks for helping us to be part of their local community.

For further details, please contact

Tonia or Ceri on 01446 720333

CUT OUT & KEEP

Full Independence fruit and veg

AT Full Independence, we are known for making life easier for everyone.

We always take on board the needs and requirements of our customers, which is why we have launched our Saturday fresh fruit and veg market.

Everything on offer will be top quality local produce at low prices, and for those that can't make it, we will have a number of different sized fruit and veg hampers that can be delivered direct to your doorstep.

If you would like to know more, contact us on 01446 711555, or we will look forward to seeing you on Saturday, March 3!

Full Independence Ltd
Units 1 & 2 Adenfield Way, Rhoose, VOG, CF62 3EA
will be offering a
FRUIT & VEG MARKET STALL
LOCAL PRODUCE
Starts this Saturday 9am - March 3rd
01446 711555

GEM ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

In Business Update

SERVICE CENTRE IS AT THE VERY HEART OF BUSINESS IN THE VALE

PICTURED, above are: Russ Grant, Emma Smith, Alun Richards and Katharine Cheshire.

THE Business Service Centre (BSC) is located in the heart of the Innovation Quarter on Barry Waterfront.

The council's flagship building opened in 2006, offering small and large office and workshop accommodation to the SME market of the Vale.

The BSC is currently 100 per cent let and is home to a range of local businesses. The business sectors represented vary from Information and Technology to the creative industries of graphic design and film and television props, to health and wellbeing and data collection and analysis and market research.

The council prides itself on low cost, easy-in, easy-out lease terms which appeal to the local business market.

The building is managed by the council's business support team, led by Emma Smith, principal officer for economic development.

Two senior economic development officers work with Emma. Geoff Gay is the workshops manager and Russ Grant offers general business support and covers inward investment projects and employment land management.

The team also strategically manages the four principal town centres in the Vale – Barry, Cowbridge, Penarth and Llantwit Major.

A full time in-house business adviser is also on hand, offering step-by-step advice and support for new business start ups. The BSC is the Vale's hub of business support.

The Welsh Government uses the building frequently to assist its business clients and holds its regeneration board meetings within the BSC's well-equipped conference space.

With in-built PowerPoint presentation equipment, refreshment facilities and flexible layouts to meet your needs, the conference space is an ideal place to hold meetings, training courses and workshop sessions.

The BSC has ample car parking spaces, as well as a dedicated service road giving priority to the workshop tenants and their deliveries.

In addition to the BSC, the council has a portfolio of office space at the Vale Enterprise Centre in Sully.

The size of offices and workshops range from 10m^2 to 132m^2 and offers a range of options for tenant businesses.

The Vale Enterprise Centre has been in council management since the late 1980s and the council has shown its continued commitment to offering these facilities to the local market by agreeing a long term lease with the site's owners, Momentive Chemicals.

The council is currently offering significant introductory discounts to new tenants at the Vale Enterprise Centre.

There has never been a better time to consider renting space here.

• ***If you are considering starting up a business, or are an existing business, please get in touch with Geoff Gay to discuss your business requirements on 01446 704857, or email invest@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk for full information about BSC.***

FANTASTIC DEALS AVAILABLE!

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BRO MORGANNWG

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Hayes Road, Sully CF64 5SY

Ring **Geoff Gay**, Workshops Manager, on **01446 704857** or e-mail **invest@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk**

Local businesses can depend on Orbits IT

WHEN IT works well, it boosts productivity, collaboration and brings new ways to communicate with customers.

When IT doesn't work, you soon realise exactly how much of your business relies on computer systems.

That's where Orbits come in – they act as your IT department, releasing you to focus on running your business and serving your customers.

We ensure your computers are secure, reliable and working as they should be.

In the unlikely event of a problem, Orbit's friendly, experienced engineers are on hand to get you back up and running as soon as possible, whether that's over the telephone, using the latest remote support technology, or on site at your office.

Orbits are proud to work with The Vale Volunteer Bureau, Age Cymru, Total Loving Care and many more local organisations.

Give Orbits a call today for free consultation on 01446 678 639 or email enquiries@orbits-ltd.co.uk

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Unique way to keep fit..!

HYDROFITNESS has been providing our members with a fun, convenient, comfortable environment since January 2007.

A spokeswoman explained: " We are committed to giving ladies all the support they need to meet their goals and to feel good about themselves on the inside and outside.

"The Hydrofitness work-out takes just 30 minutes and includes all the components needed for a complete excercise programme – warm-up, cardiovascular, strength training, cool down and stretching.

"What makes us different? You get fun, friendship and fitness in just 30 minutes.

"Having fun while exercising makes it easy to keep coming back.

"It won't take up much of your time – 30 minutes three to five times a week at the gym.

"Our unique women's workout programme is based on circuit training concepts – this is where different activities are undertaken for a short time period – between 30 and 60 seconds – known as interval training."

Time to remember Barry's pioneering woman MP

DOROTHY REES who, in 1950 became Barry's first and thus far only woman MP, was born in the 1920s, the daughter of a docker.

Educational opportunities for working class boys and girls were restricted at the time but she grasped what opportunities were available and went to the local girls' grammar school and to Barry Women's Teacher Training College.

After her marriage, she had to give up her teaching post, as was the law at the time, but used her education to become involved in politics.

She became a member and eventually a Freeman of Barry Town Council, Alderman of Glamorgan Council and a member of the Welsh Joint Education Committee, where she worked tirelessly to improve educational opportunities.

She believed that girls did better in segregated schools and she fought to keep the girls' grammar school in Barry separate. As an MP, her two major interests were housing and education.

Her maiden speech in the House of Commons was about promoting affordable housing for everyone.

She wanted all housing to have well-equipped kitchens and bathrooms to improve people's lives and health. For her, equality meant a decent place to live in and the opportunity to have a good education.

Although many people believe in this, we are still a very long way from achieving it for all.

As International Women's Day approaches again, it is time to take stock of how much has actually improved throughout the world for women.

The sad thing is that although in many western countries, women now have a much better status and more opportunities to use their skills, life is still very difficult for those in the lowest socio-economic groups.

As long as we are in the current financial climate, their lot will not improve much.

If we look at the third world, however, the plight of women is dire, and worst of all with civil wars taking place throughout Africa and the Middle East. Women have become one of the major weapons of war.

Violence and rape against women have become usual. Rape is cheaper than guns to savage and humiliate both men and women.

This year, we commemorate the life of Dorothy Rees with a lunch and speaker.

We have the privilege of listening to Lucy Dickenson who set up the SAFE Foundation.

This charity, which began in the Vale, seeks to work with small communities in the third world on projects which aim to make a difference, which then can share their expertise with other small communities.

The foundation also encourages young people from south Wales to join them in their work abroad, giving them training and skills.

At a time when it is not easy to be positive about the world Lucy, with her drive and enthusiasm, is refreshing and we look forward to her presentation.

The 11th Dorothy Rees Memorial Lunch will be held on Saturday, March 24, in St Andrews Golf Club, Argae Lane, Barry, at 12 noon.

Tickets, price £15, can be obtained by calling Gwyneth on 01446 794 554.

MARGARET ALEXANDER,
(*Secretary, Dorothy Rees Committee*)

Ward surgery

LABOUR councillors for Castleland ward Chris Elmore, Pamela Drake and Karl Kuhnell will be holding their regular monthly advice surgery on Saturday, March 3, 10:30am to 12pm in the Castleland Community Centre, Belvedere Crescent, Barry.

Residents are asked to note the change of location for the surgery. No appointment is necessary, if you need advice, but can't attend the surgery, contact Coun Chris Elmore on 07867 506 116, or 01446 402 220.

NEWS FROM PENARTH & DISTRICT RAMBLERS

From industrial Barry to heart of rural Vale

ON a lovely crisp dry winter morning, six walkers joined their leader William at the Barry Waterfront for a part urban, part rural walk with a historical theme.

During the mid 1800s, Barry was still a village, but with the sudden growth in the coal industry, Cardiff Docks could no longer cope.

A new dock was needed and, after the initial rejection of the Barry Dock Bill on November 14, 1884, the first foundations for Barry Docks began.

In 1900, the impressive head office opened, with its brick and Portland stone dressing and domed clock tower.

Outside still stands the statue of David Davies, who with other coal owners, founded the very successful Barry Dock and Railway Company.

The actual construction of the docks and railway was completed by Thomas Andrew Walker, a very clever civil engineer who worked abroad and in Britain to also create the Severn Tunnel and the Manchester Ship Canal.

Leaving Port Road, they began the rural part of the walk by crossing open fields that led them to New Wallace Farm, and down through the glorious Goldsland valley, to skirt the end of the woods and make their way to St Lythans burial chamber, for morning coffee in bright sunshine.

Legend says that any wish whispered to the stones at Halloween is granted, and the capstone is said to spin three times on midsummer's eve when the stones go bathing in the river.

Joining the lane, the group made their way towards Dyffryn House which originally dates back to 640AD when it was known as the Manor of Worlton.

During the 16th century, the manor was rented to the Button family, who remained there for several generations and who produced Admiral Thomas Button, the first navigator to reach the coast of America via the Hudson Straits.

After being sold, Thomas Pryce the new owner built a Georgian manor house and the estate was renamed Dyffryn. Before passing under the control of the Vale Council, the estate was owned by the renowned Cory and Traherne families.

Continuing up the lane, the group re-entered fields and reached the impressive Tinkinswood where the capstone is the largest in Britain and weighs a staggering 50 tons or more.

It was excavated in 1914 and the remains of around 50 humans were discovered. The stone-sided pit to the side of the chamber may also have been used as part of the burial process.

There is a myth that relates to a group of stones just south of the chamber, which are believed to be women turned to stone for dancing on the Sabbath.

Fields led the group to the lane at Dyffryn and heading up through Dyffryn Mill, now a privately-owned dwelling, the group made their way to two of the six lovely fishing lakes that form Dyffryn Springs and stopped on the bank for lunch.

Once more refreshed, a muddy path through Old Wallace Farm, more fields and two bridges led the group to the ancient track, which passed the remains of the medieval church at Highlight.

Emerging back into the town, they re-joined Colcot Road and, descending through College Road, made their way back to the Waterfront by way of the Gladstone Bridge.

On March 3, meet at 9am at Cogan Leisure Centre, for a six-mile moderate walk at Sugar Loaf Mountain; contact Liz on 029 2051 3698.

On March 4, meet at 9.30am at Cogan, for a six-mile moderate walk at Penhow; contact Janet/John on 01446 418514.

Wear suitable clothing, preferably boots and carry waterproofs, food and drinks. Some degree of fitness is required and if you are in any doubt, contact the walk leader for advice.

Forthcoming walks can be accessed by logging onto www.penarthramblers.wordpress.com/walks

Rucksack badges, programmes and membership advice can be obtained from Pam on 029 2021 9102.

JOY STRANGWARD

A single woman in Iran

THE speaker at our last meeting, Mrs Janice Proctor, stood before us in the sort of clothes she was required to wear 18 months ago on an Iranian holiday. She did not look comfortable.

She had long wanted to visit ancient sites in old Persia, but found that clothing and other restrictions meant a modern female visitor had to "jump through hoops" before permission to visit Iran was granted.

Only the face could be seen while walking in Iran, and even bare toes in sandals were forbidden, although Janice informed us that this stricture has since been lifted.

Mrs Procter's family were rather shocked at the thought of her travelling in the East on her own, albeit under the auspices of a specialist travel company.

In the event, she found herself in no danger and the Iranian people went out of their way to welcome her and stated over and over again that they wanted nothing but peace with western counties.

It impressed Janice very much to meet such friendliness, and although she would see many historical wonders in Iran, the one thing she would always remember after her visit would be the impression the people, with their friendliness, would make on her.

Among the physical wonders she saw were the great mosques and palaces of this ancient empire, together with the Peacock Throne, the Crown Jewels, the wonderful Persian Gardens and their sparkling fountains hazy in the heat, and the prophet Daniel's Tomb.

She will never forget being shown the law of the Meades and the Persians which "Shall never be changed".

Being an independent woman, she was rather shocked at some of the rather sexist and cultural attitudes she discovered. Women, whatever their position in life, are never left isolated – even if that is their personal desire. With no husband, a brother must take charge and protect. With no brother available an uncle must undertake this task and so on.

At the meeting today (March 1) Phil Knight is speaking speaking on 'The Merthyr Riots'.

Meetings are held at 10.30am on Thursdays in the hall of the United Reformed Church in Barry.

New members are very welcome. For further details, contact 02920 594881.

***MAC* TANNER**

BARRY MEN'S FORUM NEWS

Musical evening

LLANTWIT MAJOR'S Bethel Baptist Church opens its doors again after its last successful musical evening on Friday, March 9 at 7pm.

There is no admission charge, although voluntary contributions will be greatly appreciated on the night towards the Eisteddfod.

The evening will feature soloists from Llantwit schools and various local musicians.

CARDIFF ROAD, BARRY INDUSTRIAL ESTATES
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BMWize is more than a specialist service provider

BM WIZE is a garage on Palmerston Estate which, as the name suggests, is a BMW specialist.

It proudly states that its service for vehicle diagnostics is one of the best around, and is proud to offer this service to both domestic and commercial clients.

It can offer servicing and repairs, MoT preparation, diagnostics, exhausts and 24-hour accident recovery to all makes and models.

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Lloyds Auto Detailing

(more than just valeting)

LLOYDS Auto Detailing is owned and run by Lloyd Baker, whose passion has always been cars.

With help from his family and friends, he moved into Unit 17, Ty Verlon Industrial Estate and started converting it into a purpose-built cleaning bay.

After lots of hard work, Lloyd finally achieved the welcoming and professional look, with an indoor seated waiting area for customers offering complimentary tea and coffee.

Lloyd welcomes customers to call in and ask his advice – from a hand car wash, to close attention to detail in the latest car care.

Hand car wash and dry, £5; hand car wash, dry and vacuum inside £10.50; van wash from £8; mini valet from £23.50.

All this and more! Contact Lloyd on 07766 335 736, or call in for more information.

Lloyds Auto Detailing
•Hand Car Wash from £5
•Interior Clean •Mini & Full Valets
•Clay Bar Polish & Wax
More Than Just Valeting

LEFT: Palmerston's thriving business estate is one of a number located in the Barry area.

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The Business Centre's 'Coffee Zone' is a popular meeting place for a meal or a snack.

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Stairlift company has new and reconditioned models

AT South Wales Stairlifts, we supply and fit both new and reconditioned stairlifts, and rental stairlifts are available for short-term needs.

Our main priority is making sure that you get the right stairlift for both your needs and your budget.

We offer a free consultation at your home, at a time that suits you. Servicing and repairs are also available.

Hand written testimonials can be viewed on our Facebook page, *www.facebook.com/southwalesstairlifts.*

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Dinas Windows celebrates 24 years in business

DINAS WINDOWS started up in business on 8/8/88, working from home and installing windows and doors for friends and relatives.

However, word soon spread and it started taking on work for new customers.

A spokesman said: "We found premises in Llandaff, Cardiff and stayed there for four years, but the directors wanted to move closer to home, so the company would be better known locally; and in 1991, we moved to Barry where we have gone from strength-to-strength.

"As a company, we always strive to do the best that we can, when fitting our windows, doors and conservatories, which are all manufactured at our premises in Barry.

"The majority of our work comes from recommendations, and we would, therefore, like to thank all our customers, past and present, for supporting Dinas Windows and hope that they will continue to do so in the future."

Please telephone 01446 749055 or 0800 0260587 (24 hours).

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www.dinaswindows.co.uk

See more businesses from the area on pages 28 and 29

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HOW TO FIND US:
Turn at traffic lights at Dow Corning and head up Palmerston Road, turn left just before Waitrose, then follow the yellow VFM signs.
Set your sat nav to
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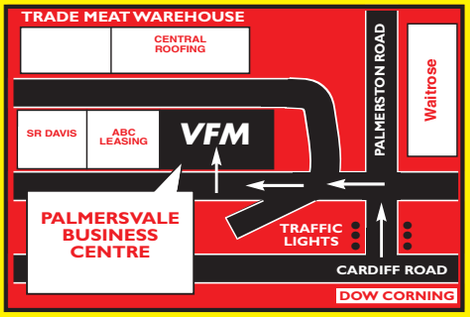

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TOP QUALITY SERVICE

JULIAN BAILEY of Bailey's Auto Services has 22 years' experience in motor repairs and servicing and opened his own garage at Palmerston in October 2011.

Julian was previously an RAC patrolman and has worked in a top garage in Barry.

He prides himself on offering a top quality, personal service for all makes and models of vehicles.

He can also offer a courtesy car on request. He is open on Monday to Saturday, from early in the morning until late.

Call in, or telephone 01446 700272 for a professional service you can trust.

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Mob: 07879 736332

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Solutions Fitness keeps you on track

SOLUTIONS Fitness, based at Palmerston Workshops off Palmerston Road (opposite Waitrose) has been providing health and fitness services since 1993.

There are two main services; sports and recreational injury assessment, treatment and rehabilitation, and personal fitness training. The whole business is centred on getting clients healthy first, then improving their movement and function.

If you keep picking up niggling injuries, why not book in for a Kinetic Chain Assessment (KCA) which will identify your issues, then undertake an Integrated Corrective Treatment (ICT) that covers full body joint and muscle release?

For more information on the full range of services check out the website at www.solutions-fitness.co.uk or call 07919 973884.

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CARDIFF ROAD, BARRY INDUSTRIAL ESTATES
More than meets the eye!

Louise and Gerrard of BeeSpoke Cycles (AKA the The Bike Doctor), Palmerston Workshops – the shop officially opens on March 3.

Help Beespoke cycles celebrate!

BEESPOKE Cycles will be launched at Palmerston Workshops on Saturday, March 3 by Gerrard Davies, Louise Edwards and Liam Murphy.

Gerrard is known as 'The Bike Doctor' in Barry.

They will be selling a range of new bikes for both adults and children – along with the popular range of new scooters and skateboards.

This family-run business is also involved in the Bike-To-Work cycle scheme.

Beespoke Cycles is the first dedicated bike shop in Barry for 15 years, so help them to celebrate!

Everyone is welcome to the open day this Saturday, March 3, for refreshments and nibbles; there is 10 per cent off on the opening day.

Free advice is always given.

Louise explained; "We are a new business and will be selling bicycles for all ages, skateboards, scooters and accessories, as well as a service and repair workshop.

"We believe that Barry, as the biggest town in Wales, should be served by its own dedicated bicycle shop.

"We are a family business and our aim is to encourage people of all ages to come to us and discuss their bicycle needs.

"Beespoke Cycles is even having a local 'tag' artist to decorate the shop to make it approachable for the scooter/skateboarding guys/girls," Louise added.

Call in to Beespoke Cycles, Unit 10, Palmerston Workshops, telephone 01446 733880.

BeeSpoke Cycles

Celebrate our opening on Saturday March 3rd
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Saturday 10am-4pm
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Bicycle Servicing & Repairs
Unit 10, Palmerston Workshops (opposite Waitrose), BARRY
Tel: 01446 733880
www.beespokecycles.co.uk

BEAD ROOM IS GOING STRONG

BOXES and Busts are ever expanding and their newest addition, The Bead Room, is going from strength to strength.

The current workshop schedule is going to expand again after the big event at the end of March (keep looking in The GEM for more details) to add Kuhimo, Crochet with Wire and Knitting with Wire, various Polymer Clay workshops, as well as tiara making and pearl knotting the professional way, to their current workshop list.

They are a must to visit for every crafter in the area, or visit their website at www.boxesandbusts.co.uk.

The Bead Room
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CARDIFF ROAD, BARRY
INDUSTRIAL ESTATES
More than meets the eye!

Baker's Baguettes – serving people in the local area.

Vital part of the economy

IN the preceding pages, a number of local businesses are featured providing a huge range of services to the Vale economy.

In recent weeks, there has been a national debate on how we can preserve the 'high street' for future generations, but other less visible commercial sectors need their publicity too.

In the Vale, trading estates host an array of businesses from food suppliers and uPVC manufacturers, to industrial removal specialists and bicycle suppliers.

Once, on a trip from the Italian coast into Rome, I noticed that there was no planning scheme separating housing and commercial units.

There would be a few houses, then a factory unit of some sort, then more houses, and another manufacturing concern – all along the same road.

It gave the businesses visibility, but the mixture of houses and units looked haphazard.

In Wales, we do things differently. To keep everything tidier we tend to keep businesses in one area and housing in another.

But because businesses are put in one particular spot, we can sometimes be unaware of what is on our doorstep.

Why go to a national double glazing company when there's a local family business just down the road?

So keep an eye out for what's on your doorstep – there may be a service that could make your life that much easier. ***TRC***

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The GEM is proud to be an official partner of the 2012 National Eisteddfod in the Vale of Glamorgan
Mae'r GEM yn falch o fod yn un o bartneriaid swyddogol Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Bro Morgannwg, 2012

Premiere prydeinig o waith newydd Karl Jenkins yn goron ar cyngherddau'r Eisteddfod

BYDD Karl Jenkins yn arwain y Premiere Prydeinig o'i waith diwed-daraf, Beirdd Cymru, ar lwyfan y Pafiliwn, fel rhan o arlwy cyngherddau Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Bro Morgannwg, a gyhoeddir heddiw (28 Chwefror).

Cafodd manylion y cyngherddau eu cyhoeddi wrth i'r Eisteddfod fynd ar daith o amgylch Bro Morgannwg i hybu a hyrwyddo'r Brifwyl a gynhelir ar hen faes awyr Llandw ger y Bontfaen a Llanilltud Fawr o 4-11 Awst eleni.

Meddai Hywel Wyn Edwards, Trefnydd yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol, "Rydym wedi creu nosweithiau ychydig yn wahanol i'r arfer eleni, ac rwy'n gobeithio y bydd yr arl-wy'n apelio at Eisteddfodwyr selog, yn ogystal â phobl sydd heb fentro i'r Pafiliwn o'r blaen. Mae'r amry-wiaeth eleni yn hynod o helaeth,gyda phob math o berfformwyr ac artisti-aid yn ymddangos ar lwyfan yr Eisteddfod i'ch diddanu.

"Braf yw croesawu rhai o berfformwyr amlycaf Cymru'n ôl atom, a braf hefyd yw gweld cynifer o wynebau newydd – ond yr un mor gyfarwydd mewn gwiri-onedd – yn ymddangos yn y Pafiliwn gyda ni eleni yn y Fro. Rydym yn gobeithio bod rhyw-beth i bopeth gyda'r nos yn yr Eisteddfod eleni, ac edrychwn ymlaen i'ch gweld yn Llandw ymhen ychydig dros bum mis."

Dewch i fwynhau Only Men Aloud yn y cyngerdd agoriadol, nos Wener 3 Awst, gydag Only Boys Aloud – y côr amryddawn a grëwyd ar gyfer cyngerdd agori-adol yr Eisteddfod yn 2010, yn dychwelyd i'w cartref gwreiddiol ar lwyfan y Pafiliwn.

Y prif berfformiad yng nghyngerdd nos Sadwrn 4 Awst yw'r Premiere Prydeinig o waith Karl Jenkins, Beirdd Cymru, gyda'r cyfansoddwr ei hun yn arwain. Perfformiwyd y gwaith hwn am y tro cyntaf yn Hwngari yn 2011, a chy-fieithwyd y geiriau i'r Gymraeg gan y Prifardd Twm Morys. Bydd cyfle hefyd i fwynhau dau o unawdwyr enwocaf ein cyfnod, Dennis O'Neill a Rebecca Evans, ynghyd â Chôr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Bro Morgannwg.

Cynhelir y Gymanfa Ganu yn y Pafiliwn nos Sul. Gwledd o ganu cynulledfaol dan arweiniad profiadol Euros Rhys Evns, gyda Robert Nicholls wrth yr organ. Cefnogir y Gymanfa gan Eglwys Annibynnol Gymraeg Radnor Walk, Chelsea, Llundain.

Ymunwch gydag un o fawrion y byd adloniant, Dafydd Iwan, wrth iddo ddathlu hanner can mlynedd o ddiddanu cynulleidfaoedd ar draws Cymru, ar lwyfan y Pafiliwn nos Lun. Cawn deithio drwy dde-gawdau Dafydd a'r band yng nghwmni'r dyn ei hun a'i westeion, gan gynnwys Ar Log, Heather Jones, Côr Plant Heol-y-March ac Edward Morus Jones. Bydd Greta a Miriam Isaac o Fro Morgannwg hefyd yn perfformio ar y noson.

Bydd nos Fawrth yn noson wahanol iawn i'r arfer ar lwyfan y Pafiliwn, pan fyddwn yn cynnal Gala Gomedi am y tro cyntaf yn yr Eisteddfod. Dewch i fwynhau rhai o ddi-grifwyr a pherfformwyr comedi gorau Cymru, gan gynnwys Tudur Owen, Arthur Picton, Daniel Glyn, Gary Slaymaker, Ifan Gruffudd a Dewi Pws, mewn noson o sgetsys a stand-yp. Bydd y noson hon yn addas i bawb dros 14 oed.

Nosweithiau o gystad-lu fydd yn y Pafiliwn nos Fercher a nos Wener, gyda chystadleuthau ieuenctid yn cael sylw nos Fercher a'r corau'n cystadlu ar nos Wener.

Cawn gyfle i fwynhau Noson yng nghwmni Caryl nos Iau, gyda sioe newydd sbon sydd wedi'i chreu'n arbennig ar gyfer yr Eisteddfod eleni. Mae Caryl Parry Jones yn un o berf-formwyr mwyaf amryd-dawn Cymru, a bydd y noson hon yn gyfle i fwynhau'i chwmni hi, y band a llu o'i chymeri-adau enwocaf drwy'r blynyddoedd.

Mae tocynnau cyn-gherddau nos Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Bro Morgannwg yn mynd ar werth ddydd Iau 1 Mawrth. Gallwch archebu tocynnau ar y we – www.eisteddfod.org.uk – neu drwy ffonio'r linell docynnau – 0845 4090 800.

Bydd y manylion i gyd yn ymddangos yn ein cylchlythyr, ar ein gwe-fan ac ar ein tudalen ar facebook – www.face-book.com/eisteddfod. Gallwch hefyd ddilyn yr Eisteddfod ar Twitter am y straeon diweddaraf – www.twitter.com/eisteddf

od, a gallwch hefyd gofrestru i dderbyn rhagor o wybodaeth, naill ai trwy fynd i'n gwefan neu drwy anfon e-bost at gwyb@eisteddfod.org.uk

SIONED EDWARDS

UK premiere of Karl Jenkins' new work will headline Eisteddfod concerts line-up...

KARL Jenkins will conduct the UK premiere of his latest work, *Beirdd Cymru* (Poets of Wales), on the Pavilion stage, as part of the Vale of Glamorgan National Eisteddfod concerts line-up.

Details of the concerts were announced on Tuesday as the Eisteddfod team travelled around the Vale promoting and publicising the festival, held at the old airfield in Llandow near Cowbridge and Llantwit Major from August 4-11 this year.

Eisteddfod organiser, Hywel Wyn Edwards, said: "This year's evenings are slightly different to the usual concert line-ups we've had over recent years, and I hope that they will appeal to our regular concert goers as well as bringing a new audience into the Pavilion for the evening events. We have a vast array of talents appearing at this year's festival, and we hope the evenings offer something for everyone.

"We are delighted to welcome some of Wales' best loved performers back to the festival, and we are also pleased to see so many new faces – although just as well-known – appearing in the Pavilion this year in the Vale of Glamorgan.

" There is just over five months to go before the festival starts and we hope to welcome thousands of visitors to Llandow for a glorious week of entertainment and enjoyment."

Join us to enjoy Only Men Aloud at the opening concert on Friday 3 August, with Only Boys Aloud – the talented youth choir created for the opening concert at the 2010 Eisteddfod – returning to their original home on the Pavilion stage.

The main work in the Saturday evening concert is the UK Premiere of Karl Jenkins' Beirdd Cymru (Bards of Wales) with the composer himself conducting.

The work was first performed in Hungary in 2011, and the words were translated into Welsh by Twm Morys. Two of the greatest soloists of our time, Dennis O'Neill and Rebecca Evans, will also join the 200-strong Eisteddfod Choir.

The Cymanfa Ganu (congregational singing festival) is held in the Pavilion on Sunday.

The festival will be led by experienced conductor Euros Rhys Evans, with Robert Nicholls on the organ. The evening is supported by the Radnor Walk Welsh Congregational Church, Chelsea, London.

Book your ticket to see one of Wales' greatest performers on the Pavilion stage, as Dafydd Iwan celebrates fifty years entertaining audiences across Wales on Monday evening. Join him and his guests, including Heather Jones, Côr Plant Heol-y-March and Edward Morus Jones and Miriam and Greta Isaac.

Tuesday is comedy night at the Pavilion as we host the biggest night in Weldh comedy history! Join Tudur Owen, Arthur Picton, Daniel Glyn, Gary Slaymaker, Ifan Gruffudd, Dewi Pws and many more on stage for a hilarious evening of sketches and stand-up. This evening will be suitable for ages 14 and over.

Wednesday and Friday evening sees competing on the Pavilion stage, with youth competitions on Wednesday and choral competitions on Friday.

We can enjoy an evening with Caryl on Thursday night, with a brand new show created for this year's Eisteddfod. Caryl Parry Jones is one of Wales' best-loved and versatile performers, so join us – and some of her most famous characters – for an entertaining one-off show.

Tickets for the Vale of Glamorgan National Eisteddfod evening concerts go on sale on Thursday March 1.

Tickets can be ordered online – www.eisteddfod.org.uk – or by ringing the ticket office – 0845 4090 800.

All details will also appear in our regular newsletter, online and on our Facebook page – www.facebook.com/eisteddfod and via our Twitter feed – www.twitter.com/eisteddfod. Register to receive the latest information, either online or by emailing gwyb@eisteddfod.org.uk

SIONED EDWARDS

ABOVE:
Soloist Rebecca Evans will join the 200-strong Eisteddfod Choir for the Karl Jenkins concert.

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL CYNGOR BRO MORGANNWG

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995

Development that may affect a Conservation Area/ Datblygu a allai effeithio ar Ardal Gadwraeth

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00085/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Change of use from five bedrooms with ensuite facilities to first floor, into 3 no. self contained residential flats comprising 2 no. 1 bedroom and 1 no. two bedrooms and to construct glass roof conservatory to alleyway adjoining existing covered way
Location:/Lleoliad: Vale of Glamorgan Inn, 53, High Street, Cowbridge
Conservation Area:/
Ardal Gadwraeth Cowbridge

Listed Building Consent / Caniatâd Adeilad Rhestredig

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00109/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Consent to display 2 No. signs
Location:/Lleoliad: Principality Building Society, 28, High Street, Cowbridge
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00110/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Interior and exterior alterations, including replacement of windows to front and rear elevations, replacement front door and installation of new galleried staircase, fitted kitchen and toilets.
Location:/Lleoliad: The Three Tuns, St Nicholas
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00111/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Installation of communications equipment
Location:/Lleoliad: Library, Kings Square, Barry
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00113/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Roof repairs
Location:/Lleoliad: The Old School, Wine Street, Llantwit Major
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00123/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Addition of external insulation and new render
Location:/Lleoliad: 3, Pwll y Min Crescent, Peterston Super Ely
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00159/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Replacement of rain water goods
Location:/Lleoliad: Dock Offices, Subway Road, Barry Docks
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II*

Application(s) of General Interest / Ceisiadau o Ddiddordeb Cyffredinol

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00103/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Erection of a 22.8m x 60.9 metre steel portal frame multi purpose farm building
Location:/Lleoliad: Sealands Farm, St. Brides Major

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00136/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Change of use to allow for recycling of inert materials brought to the site
Location:/Lleoliad: Argoed Isha Quarry, Llansannor, Llanharry

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00137/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Residential development comprising the erection of eight dwellings, seventeen car parking spaces, landscaping and ancillary works
Location:/Lleoliad: Land off Dinas Road, Caversham Park, Penarth

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00146/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Processing of existing stockpiles and loose material with crushing and screening machinery and removal from site
Location:/Lleoliad: Argoed Isha Quarry, Llansannor

May affect a Public Right of Way/ Gall effeithio ar Hawl Tramwy Cyhoeddus

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00146/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Processing of existing stockpiles and loose material with crushing and screening machinery and removal from site
Location:/Lleoliad: Argoed Isha Quarry, Llansannor

Full details (including plans) may be inspected during normal working hours for a period of 21 days in the offices of the Head of Planning and Transportation at the address given below, or via the Council's Online Applications Register at vog.planning-register.co.uk.
Mae'r holl fanylion (gan gynnwys y cynlluniau) i'w gweld yn swyddfeydd Pennaeth Cynllunio a Chludiant y cyngor (gwelwch y cyfeiriad ar waelod y dudalen) yn ystod oriau arferol swyddfa, am gyfnod o 21 o ddiwrnodau. Cewch eu gweld hefyd ar Gofrestr Ceisiadau Ar-lein y cyngor drwy fynd i vog.planning-register.co.uk.

Dated: 1st March, 2012
Rob Thomas
Head of Planning and Transportation
The Vale of Glamorgan Council,
Dock Office,
Barry Docks,
Barry.
CF63 4RT

Dyddiedig: 1st March, 2012
Rob Thomas
Pennaeth Cynllunio a Chludiant
Cyngor Bro Morgannwg,
Swyddfa'r Doc,
Dociau'r Barri,
Y Barri.
CF63 4RT

City (and Wales) can take pride in Wembley defeat

by LEIGH GRUFFYDD SANDERS

IT was yet another near miss in the history of Cardiff City Football Club, but one that everyone can take immense pride from after a tantalisingly close penalty shootout defeat to Liverpool in the Carling Cup Final at Wembley.

After Tom Heaton had denied Steven Gerrard and Charlie Adam had blazed over; Don Cowie had Cardiff one to the good after Kenny Miller had hit the post with their first spot kick. Dirk Kuyt leveled for the Reds as Rudy Gestede also hit the post, before Stewart Downing and Peter Whittingham made it 2-2 going in to the final round of kicks.

Glen Johnson emphatically dispatched Liverpool's fifth, and Steven's cousin Anthony stepped up for Cardiff with all the pressure on his shoulders, and put his penalty wide of the mark.

It was a cruel end to a day in which Cardiff had conducted themselves way beyond expectation.

After having the better of the early running they took the lead when Miller played in Joe Mason who finished well below the onrushing Pepe Reina.

Despite one Johnson effort that crashed against the bar in the opening two minutes Liverpool were struggling to test Heaton with Gerrard, Downing and Adam in particular wasting some long-range efforts.

Miller had a good chance to double the lead just after half time but scuffed wide of Reina's goal when well-placed, and they were ruing that miss on the hour when Martin Skrtel reacted quickest to a Luis Suarez header which hit the post to level through Heaton's legs.

But Cardiff refused to give in, and could have won it in normal time had Miller been able to keep his effort down from six yards having run on to Gestede's knock down.

When Kuyt gave Liverpool the lead in extra time many thought it was game over.

But, again, Cardiff refused to give in and after one delightful Whittingham corner saw Kuyt clear off the Liverpool goal-line, the resulting corner dropped to Ben Turner who prodded home to send the blue half of Wembley in to raptures.

The final moments were tense, and ultimately heartbreaking for the Bluebirds faithful as Kenny Dalglish's side ended Liverpool's six-year trophy drought. But Malky Mackay and his team can hold their heads high after a fine performance as they begin to prepare for next Sunday's crunch Championship showdown with table-toppers West Ham United.

The mood among the fans was understandably mixed on the long journey home. While there was dejection at another 'almost' moment, and plenty of 'ifs and buts' to ponder, the feeling of immense pride at what they had just witnessed outweighed them, and most will be quietly happy with the positive vibe currently surrounding the club.

COWBRIDGE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SPORTS REPORT

The year-8 and 9 girls keep the school cross-country flag flying

ON a cold day in February before half term, a depleted Cowbridge cross-country team headed to the final race of the Cardiff & Vale School's Cross Country at Trelai.

It was an extremely disappointing end for the year-7 race. Many girls, with various excuses, did not run, which left Cowbridge without a year-7 girl's team. Selina Radcliffe ran her best, however, with an ankle injury but was unable to finish.

The year-8 and 9 girls' team put in an outstanding performance to take the overall team title by more than 30 points. There were some superb runs from Seren Allin (first), Nadine James (seventh), Rebecca Thomas (11th) Genevieve Kirk (14th) and Ela Emyr (17th), who all finished in the top 20.

Fantastic performances from other team members in this age group saw Cowbridge B and C teams finish within the top 10 from all the schools in the county.

Cowbridge girls struggled in the senior age group, as many girls pulled out of the competition with illness and injury. Ffion Hopkin put in a brave performance, but illness meant she was unable to complete the course.

LL

Hockey

THE year-10s played Plasmawr in the county hockey tournament.

Cowbridge won 2-1 in a good game and Ellie Eddy Williams was voted player of the match for her outstanding contribution to the game both in attack and defence.

Izzy Eddy Williams, Niamh Gallagher, Olivia Brown and Eliza Smith also played great games, while the year-9s, who helped the year-10s, were excellent players.

Rosa Hartman set up the goal, Evie Williams showed good attacking skills and Hannah Lister Sims scored.

They are now through to the final so we wish them all well.

LJ

Netball

ALL the schools in the area came to Cowbridge to take part in the year-8 Vale netball tournament.

Year-8 have a strong netball team so were keen to win. The group stages demonstrated Cowbridge's strength in this age group, playing every school and producing some excellent results, beating St Richard Gwyn 10-1, Llantwit 9-0, Stanwell and Bryn Hafren 7-0 and Bro Morgannwg 5-1.

This resulted in a match with Stanwell in the final. The team were eager to exert their dominance but were surprised by a quick and strong start by Stanwell. As they settled into the final, they began to play the quick attacking netball that saw them so dominant in the group stages.

The last couple of minutes were nervous but Cowbridge took the title with a 4-3 win. All the girls played extremely well and achieved a well-deserved victory.

LL

Sports hall athletics

IN the under-15 girls' sports hall competition, Cowbridge fielded a strong team.

The girls had to compete in the two or four-lap run, standing long jump or vertical jump, and either the shot or speed bounce. Clare Taylor from Radyr won the competition.

Izzy Williams came second overall, competing in the two-lap (fourth), standing long jump (second) and speed bounce (second).

Lilli Evans came third overall, competing in the two-lap (third), vertical jump (first) and speed bounce (first).

Annabel Curle came fourth, competing in the four-lap (first), standing long jump (third) and shot (fifth).

Sally Gambling came fifth competing in the two-lap (ninth) vertical jump (third) and speed bounce (second).

Eddy Williams came ninth, competing in the four-lap (seventh), standing long jump (fifth), shot putt (seventh).

Brooke Langton Cryer came 13th, two-lap (10th), standing long jump (fourth), shot put (sixth).

Sarah Lewis 11th, two-lap (sixth), vertical jump (11th), shot putt (eighth).

Hannah Lister Sims 15th, four-lap (11th), standing long jump (15th), speed bounce (third).

Megan McNamee 16th, two-lap (seventh), vertical jump (16th), speed bounce (fifth).

Megan Langton Cryer 24th, two-lap (14th), standing long jump (eighth), shot putt (16th).

Rebecca Thomas 26th, four-lap (sixth), standing long jump (15th), shot putt (19th).

Alice Tudor 26th, four-lap (13th), standing long jump (15th), shot putt (12th).

Laurie Thomas 29th, two-lap (18th), standing long jump (eighth), shot putt (15th).

Olivia Brown two-lap (26th), standing long jump (21st), shot putt (10th).

Izzy Eddy Williams, Lilli Evans, Annabel Curle and Sally Gambling have been invited to compete for Cardiff and Vale at the Welsh Championships, with Ellie Eddy Williams and Brooke Langton Cryer as reserves. We wish them luck in the competition.

The under-13 sports hall athletics competition took place at Whitchurch School with Cowbridge fielding a large team.

There were some great performances by May Bell, Niamh Galton and Bridget Walters, who have qualified to represent the county at the Welsh Championships with Jemma Viney, Gabby Swift and Emma Bowler selected as reserves.

Results were as follows: Maya Bell: two-lap (second) standing long jump (third), vertical jump (fourth).

Niamh Galton: high jump (third), standing long jump (first).

Bridget Walters: two-lap (eighth), vertical jump (second), speed bounce (first).

Jemma Viney: two-lap (12th), standing long jump (fifth), speed bounce (ninth).

Gabby Swift: two-lap (48th), standing long jump (18th), standing triple jump (second).

Emma Bowler: two-lap (37th), vertical jump (fourth), shot (fifth).

Beth Swallow: two-lap (sixth), standing long jump (seventh), speed bounce (second).

Rachel Bent: two-lap (19th), standing long jump (21st), standing triple jump (fourth).

Pippa Jolles: two-lap (43rd), standing long jump (16th), speed bounce (43rd).

Ffion Vickers: four-lap (eighth), standing long jump (41st), shot (eighth).

Cerys Bradshaw: six-lap (10th), standing Triple Jump (19th), speed bounce (18th).

Genevieve Kirk: six-lap (11th), standing long jump (46th), vertical jump (24th).

Selina Radcliffe: six-lap (15th), standing long jump (40th), speed bounce (40th).

Sian Smith: six-lap (16th), shot (11th).

Sashini Jayasinghe: high jump (sixth), vertical jump (ninth).

Hetty Breed: standing triple jump (sixth), vertical jump (27th).

LJ

Cowbridge RFC back in action

COWBRIDGE First XV return to league action on Saturday with an away game at Cwmgwrach kick off 2:30pm.

With the Ogmore Vale game called off, Cowbridge last played five weeks ago. Each of the final seven games is vitally important if Cowbridge want to maintain their challenge towards the top of the table; on March 24, Tonna are the visitors to the Athletic Field .

The youth are also in action on Saturday at home to Fairwater.

RV/RK

Llantwit put in the perfect 10 out of 10 performance to maintain lead at the top

LLANTWIT Major AFC welcomed Carnetown BGC to their Windmill Lane ground for this Division 1 fixture in the South Wales Amateur league on a beautiful sunny Vale afternoon.

Both teams started well but it was the Major who started to shine, quickly settling down and playing some great possession and one-touch passing football.

The Major soon went one up with a fine goal scored from a powerful direct free kick by Robinson from just outside the box which was deflected to beat the visiting keeper.

This goal was quickly followed by another when a defensive clearance was intercepted and Jordan Mortimore found Lee Jones unmarked and he scored a fine goal to go two up.

Llantwit were buzzing now with some great link up play between Shaw, Jones and Attley on the left and Constant, Rees and Lindsay down the right flank, all supported well by Cleave in the centre and some fine creative play from the strong and reliable back four feeding Mortimore on his own up front.

More goals soon followed from Mortimore, Cleave and another from Lindsay and the visitors' heads were down. The midfield five were really in impressive form and the opposition were really struggling to get the ball as the Llantwit control, passing and movement was the best the home support had seen this season.

Further goals came from Rhys Attley, a wonderful volley, and a penalty from skipper Lindsay, following a foul on Mortimore.

Six up at half time and the visitors were wondering what had hit them as they hadn't been playing that badly but the Major seemed to score from every opportunity.

The second half got underway with substitute Cox replacing the impressive Constant at right back. Further goals came from Mortimore, before he went off injured and was replaced by Clement, who returned after a few weeks absence and soon scored with a great goal from 25 yards out.

A further goal from Jones sealed a great win for the Major who remain top of the league and seven points clear of second place Treforest.

Team: J Lansdown, J Constant, R Gould, D Robinson, A Shaw, R Attley, J Rees, D Cleave, L Jones, S Lindsay (captain) and J Mortimore; substitutes: N Cox and L Clement.

This Saturday the Major are away in the W John Owen Cup, quarter final, at Merthyr Saints, with the kick off at 2pm

PL

ABOVE; Beth Allman, Meryl Hanmer and Josh Rees.

POINT-TO-POINT PRESENTATION

A long tradition was celebrated at the Glamorgan Hunt Supper last week when a Memorial Rose Bowl was presented to the owner of the 2011 Point-to-Point Members, Subscribers and Farmers race.

The horse, Obelix de Longchaux, is owned by Mrs Helen Porter a long time supporter, and trained by her husband Bob, who was a fine point-to-point jockey in the 50s and 60s.

Bob was presented with an original racecard from one of his most memorable wins at the old Penllyn course on a little grey mare called Trehynghll.

PHOTO BY HEATHER MARCH

The elegant silver trophy was originally commissioned by the Vale Agricultural Society and the Point-to-Point committee in 1951 and presented to Mr. and Mrs Fred Williams of the Bear in Cowbridge, parents of Evan Williams who rode the Grand National winner Royal Mail in 1937.

The Williams family eventually presented it as a perpetual trophy for this race.

This year's Point-to-Point will be held on Saturday, March 24 at the lovely scenic course at Uplands Farm, Ystradowen.

For details contact Secretary Peter Thomas on 07855366902.

ON AND OFF THE TURF with Brian Lee

The Snail is no slouch

COWBRIDGE'S James Tudor, who rode Jeff Bird's nine-year-old bay gelding *The Snail* to victory in the confined race at the Curre and Howick Point-To-Point Steeplechases at Howick near Chepstow last Sunday, was full of praise for the horse's trainer, Jon Tudor.

He said: "The horse won five races on the bounce under rules for Evan Williams but lost his way and all interest in racing afterwards. However, Mr Jeff Bird, Jon's brother-in-law, bought the horse from the yard last summer and Jon has showed a lot of patience with him, and it has paid off."

James, who is assistant trainer to Evan Williams, made all the running and held on in the closing stages to beat *Baddam* by half-a-length. The runner-up was a class flat horse and in 2006 had won the Ascot Stakes and the Queen Alexandra Stakes at the Royal Ascot meeting. The latter race, at two miles and six furlongs, is the longest in the racing calendar.

Cowbridge's Mr Bird said: "*The Snail* enjoyed himself today and it is all down to Jonathan who has done wonders with him."

Charlotte Prichard, who hails from the Vale, chalked up her first winner in only her second ride when landing the members' race on her father Ian's *AlRoyal*. Charlotte, who recently celebrated her 16th birthday, brought her mount with a well-timed run to win by two-and-a-half lengths from the favourite, *Minella For Food*.

Charlotte, the only female rider in the race, was riding against more experienced riders and on this showing we should be hearing a lot more from her. However, she was quickly brought down to earth in the very next race when her mount *West Bay* failed to survive the open ditch.

Beth Roberts' *Chesnut Annie* made it win number 30 (28 point-to-points and two hunter chases) when landing the AGA ladies' open race under Sally Randell, who led from start to finish to score by 12 lengths from *Petit Lord* ridden by Angela Rucker.

The most exciting race of the day was the men's open, in which four horses all had a chance jumping the last fence. However, it was the fourth horse, Rae Jones' *Up There* which emerged victorious. Ridden by James Ridley, *Up There* got up on the line to win by half-a-length from *Interpleader* with *Khachaturian* a further half-a-length away in third spot.

MAC HALEN LANDS GAMBLE

***MAC HALEN*, trained at Llancarfan by Evan Williams, landed a gamble in the Bathwick Tyres Handicap Chase at Taunton last week. Backed from 20-1 to 9-1, *Mac Halen*, who was ridden by 5lb claimer Adam Wedge, romped home nine lengths clear of *Kap West*.**

Williams and Wedge teamed up again at Ludlow 24 hours later and won the Attwood Marsh Trophy Handicap Chase with *Akarshan*, who had five lengths to spare over the favourite *Esteem*.

The Brecon and Talybont Hunt Steeplechases take place this Saturday at Llanfrynach (first race 1pm).

You can email news and views to Brian Lee at leebrian@btinternet.com or phone him on 02920736438.

Squash team shows form

COWBRIDGE Squash Clubs teams have strung together results with diverse levels of success in recent weeks with the A Team Bar 44 recording three victories on the bounce to rise to third in the South Wales League Div 2 East.

The B Team Bar 44, on the other hand, have seen a string of defeats with a depleted squad result in them being bottom of the South Glam Div 1 table.

Dave Matthews' C Team managed a win in their most recent match (their first win since the first fixture of the season).

Nick Guard and the A team lads started their string of form with a 4-1 win away at Llantrisant B and followed up with 3-2 victories at home to Old Penarthins A and away at Newport E - the aforementioned Guard sealing victory in this latter match with a 12-10 win in the fifth after facing match balls against.

This result puts the A's in third slot ahead of the mid-table pack chasing the top teams from Cardiff C and St Mellons B and 26 points ahead of the relegation spaces - all bodes well on this form.

The B team, however, has been ripped apart by injuries to key players while work commitments have excluded others from selection (including playing with two players short at Rhiwbina recently) resulting in a series of hammerings to leave them languishing at the foot of South Glamorgan Division 1 and facing a serious case of relegation, unless a re-structure of the leagues to 8 team divisions compared to the current 6 team divisions.

Cowbridge C team perked up in their most recent match with a resounding 4-1 (18-7) over Rhiwbina F to give themselves a chance of survival at the expense of the north Cardiff team.

Off-court matters have brought about a change of culture following the recent EGM which was considered necessary following the sad passing away of chairman Clive Prigg - he was most certainly regarded as "Mr Cowbridge Squash", representing the squash section at Athletic Club meetings at the top level through operational duties such as court bookings and light meters to routine maintenance and club cleaning arrangements.

An approach has been put in place with a spreading of the load of duties to ensure the club keeps ticking over in as efficient a manner as possible - this new team has seen some members change roles, while others have been brought in to ease the burden.

This consists of chairman Russ Watts, vice-chairman Mike Board, club captain Nick Guard, treasurer Ian Taylor, maintenance manager Nick Merrett and juniors organisers Niall Sloan and Julie Clode.

All membership enquiries should be directed to membership secretary Dave Garnham (07721 533443) or e-mail general enquiries to russ.watts@btopenworld.com

RW

Local school pupils will be part of the Olympic team!

THREE local pupils will be at the Olympic Games this year – as part of the organising team that will create a cross country course in Greenwich Park for the three day eventing competition.

The three, all members from the Pony Club, have been selected among just 40 young people from the world-wide membership of the Pony Club to help out at this year's Olympics.

They are Meryl Hanmer (17) from Bodringallt Farm, Coychurch, Joshua Rees (16) from Llanharan, and Bethan Allman (16) from Colwinston.

Meryl and Josh are from the Llangeinor Hunt branch of the Pony Club and Bethan is from the Glamorgan Hunt branch.

Meryl goes to Archbishop McGrath School in Bridgend, while Josh and Bethan go to Cowbridge Comprehensive School.

Marion Elliott who is the District Commissioner for The Llangeinor Hunt Pony Club said: "They will be required to attend training sessions in London to go over their duties and to collect their Olympic uniform and security passes.

"The type of things they might expect to carry out on the actual day could be to catch loose horses on the course after a rider's fall, or steward the public on the course crossing paths.

Bethan Allman said: "My mother applied for Olympic tickets to watch the eventing, but we were unsuccessful.

"I am really thrilled that, not only will I now have a better view of the horses and riders, but that I am actually going to be a part of the 2012 Games."

A delighted Joshua Rees said: "I am so much looking forward to seeing all these world class riders competing on the very best horses and being so close to all of this happening. For any young rider this is a dream come true."

Meryl Hanmer added, "It is such an honour to be chosen to represent Pony Club and take an active role in the Olympics."

Marion Elliott said: "Not only is this a great honour for these young people but it is also a great honour for The Llangeinor and Glamorgan branches as well.

"As far as I am aware, Meryl, Josh and Bethan are the only three Pony Club members in Wales to have be chosen, so to have three from this area is quite remarkable.

"Meryl and Josh are exemplary senior members of our club and always do so much to help and I know that Bethan teaches the younger members at her Glamorgan branch every week.

"Llangeinor and Glamorgan Pony Clubs are very proud of their achievements in being selected."

All three are highly qualified for their Olympic roles, thanks to qualifications gained through the Pony Club.

Meryl Hanmer has completed her bronze, silver and gold in YELA (Young Equestrian Leaders Award). She is currently taking her UKCC Level 2 sporting coach certificate.

Joshua Rees has taken the same bronze, silver and gold in YELA, and is taking his UKCC Level 1 sporting coach certificate.

Josh's mother is a cousin to local racehorse trainer Tim Vaughan and like Tim, Josh would like to pursue a professional career with horses as a rider or trainer, with the emphasis probably leaning more towards show-jumping.

Bethan and was in the Cowbridge Comprehensive team that took took first place in the first UK Schools Showjumping Championship at Hickstead.

Llantwit players spring surprise

AFTER another spell without matches due to ground conditions, Windmill Lane was declared fit for play on Saturday and what a day it turned out to be for the under-15 team who defeated Cadoxton Imps 6-1 for the suprise result of the day.

The under-15 team, after a very poor start to the season, have improved in recent matches and this improvement showed on Saturday. After a slow start, they came alive in the second half and the fitter Llantwit team scored three goals late on to give them their best win of the campaign.

Liam Reid (2), Josh Bradfield, George Thompson, Arron Phillips and Reece Bennett scored the goals with the man of the match award going to Reece Bennett for an outstanding performance.

The under-12B started well but fell away against Cadoxton Imps A in the second half to lose 7-1; Llantwit's marksman was Ryan Malton.

The under-14 side entertained close rivals Dinas Powys and easily beat them 7-1. Llantwit proved to be much stronger on the day and led 4-1 at the interval and added another three second half goals to round off an excellent display. The Llantwit goals were shared between Will Perkins, Richard Stephens, Kyle Henderson, Geraint Jones and Ashford Thomas.

GJ

KNIGHTS

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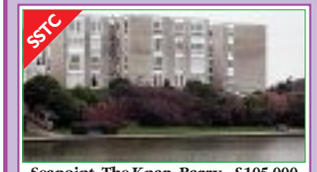

Seapoint, The Knap, Barry - £105,000
Well presented one double bedroom ground floor apartment situated in the desirable knap area • Panoramic views across The Knap, Pebble Beach & Sea beyond • Kitchen/diner with built in oven/inset hob • Close to Barry train station providing links to Cardiff & Bridgend

Greenwood Street, Barry - £109,950
Well presented traditional two bedroom mid terrace property situated in the heart of Barry • Two reception rooms • Modern fitted kitchen & first floor bathroom • GCH & upvc double glazing • Enclosed landscaped rear garden • Off road parking • Walking distance to barry town main shopping centre, bus route & train station providing links to Cardiff & Bridgend

Sycamore Crescent, Barry - £174,950
Larger than average 3/4 bedroom detached property, set on a generous size plot • Planning permission passed by Vale of Glamorgan to erect three bedroom detached dormer bungalow (expires July 2015) • 3/4 reception rooms • Upvc double glazing & GCH

Windsor Road, Barry - £159,950
Well presented traditional four bedroom bay fronted property situated in the West End of Barry • Additional loft room conversion • Lounge through dining room • Kitchen/breakfast room • Upvc double glazing • Gas central heating via newly installed combi boiler

Enfield Drive, Barry - £164,950
Well presented 3 bedroom etached residence located in a cul de sac on the popular Hunters Ridge development, North Barry • Lounge through dining room • Conservatory • Upvc double glazing & gas GCH • Enclosed rear garden • Driveway & garage

Ivy Cottage, Gileston Village - £285,000
Rare to the market place • Immaculately presented two double bedroom detached property • Set on wide plot in semi rural location • Distant sea views • 2 reception areas • Conservatory • Driveway & garage • Potential to extend (subject to planning permission)

Clos Y Wylan, Barry Island - £227, 995
3 bedroom semi detached property with panoramic views across Jackson's Bay, Bristol Channel & Somerset coastline • Lounge • Kitchen/breakfast room • Conservatory • GCH • Upvc double glazing • Enclosed low maintenance rear garden

Porthkerry Road, Barry - £150,000
Rare to the market place • 5 bedroom, 3 storey, mid terrace property situated in the West End of Barry • In need of refurbishment • 3 reception rooms • Kitchen • GCH • Enclosed rear garden • far reaching sea views • Walking distance to High Street shops, primary schools & train station

Pleasant View, Barry - £260,000
Rare to the market place - 3 bedroom detached true bungalow • Set in cul de sac situated off Port Road East, North of Barry • 2 reception rooms • Modern kitchen/breakfast room & bathroom • Conservatory • GCH via combi boiler • 2 driveways

Marine Drive, Barry - £349,000
Elevated 3 double bedroom detached property set in popular garden suburbs area, West End Barry • Uninterrupted, far reaching panoramic sea views • 2 reception rooms • Fitted kitchen & utility area • Enclosed low maintenance rear garden • Driveway & tandem garage

Wyndham Street, Barry - £49,950
1 double bedroom ground floor apartment situated in the heart of Barry • 'Stone throw' from Holton Road shops & bus route • Lounge with views • Upvc double glazing & GCH • Residents parking • Communal garden area • Applicants must be 60 or over

Kenilworth Road, Barry - £105,950
Traditional 2 bedroom bay fronted mid terrace property situated in the east End of Barry • Lounge through dining room • Fitted kitchen with Range cooker to remain • First floor bathroom with jacuzzi style bath • Upvc double glazing & GCH • Enclosed rear garden & forecourt • Walking distance of Barry Road and main street shops

Esgid Mair, Barry - £229,950
4 double bedroom detached property situated on the popular Pencoedtre village estate • 2 reception rooms • Modern kitchen/breakfast room • Upvc double glazing • GCH • Low maintenance decked garden • Double driveway & integral garage • Easy access Cardiff/M4

Orchard Crescent, Dinas Powys - £289,950
4 bedroom semi detached property set on a corner plot, situated in a cul de sac location within Dinas Powys • 2 reception rooms • Modern kitchen/breakfast room with granite work surfaces & marble floor • Upvc double glazing & GCH • Garage (presently converted)

Woodham Park, Barry - £114,995
2 bedroom end of link property set on a popular development, situated off Colcot Road • Lounge/diner • Kitchen with built in oven/inset hob • Sun lounge/lean to • Modern 1st floor bathroom • Enclosed rear garden • Double gates providing off road parking

Gelyn Y Cler, Barry - £219,950
4 bedroom detached residence situated on the popular Pencoedtre village development • 2 reception rooms • Conservatory • Kitchen/breakfast room • Utility room • Enclosed South facing rear garden • Double driveway suitable for 2 cars • Garage

Caer Ffynnon, Barry - £269,950
Individually designed detached residence offering versatile accomodation • Self contained unit ideal as granny annexe, teenager den or if desired converted back to garage & storage • 2 fitted kitchens • 2 bathrooms • Front, side & rear gardens • Walking distance of The Knap

Mountbatten Road, Barry Offers in excess of £149,950
Well presented modern 3 bedroom semi detached property set on a corner plot situated in North Barry • 2 reception rooms • Garage conversion providing further bedroom/reception room • Newly fitted kitchen & bathroom • Upvc double glazing • Front, side & rear gardens

Merthyr Dyfan Road, Barry - £224,950
Extended well presented 5 bedroom semi detached property, situated on the outskirts of Barry • Lounge • Sitting room • Dining room • Conservatory • Kitchen with utility room • Shower room & bathroom • Double garage • Generous enclosed rear garden

Bron Awelon, Barry - £224,950
3 double bedroom semi detached property set in the popular garden suburbs area • 27'8" lounge with patio doors onto garden • Dining room • Conservatory • Fitted solid oak kitchen • Downstairs bathroom & further 1st floor bathroom • GCH • South facing garden

St Barucs House, Barry - £330,000
Former school house completely renovated & extended to a high specification throughout • Ground floor apartment • Set in an exclusive gated community with secure video entry • 3 double bedrooms with ensuite to master bedroom • Generous kitchen/family area

Purdey Close, Barry - £159,950
3 bedroom end link property situated on the popular Hunters Ridge development in North Barry • Set in cul-de-sac location • Lounge • Dining room with patio doors opening onto garden patio • GCH • Enclosed low maintenance garden • Parking space & single garage

Amherst Crescent, Barry Island - £159,950
4 bedroom terrace property • Views across Maslin Park towards Barry Island & sea beyond • 2 reception rooms • First floor shower room • Wood effect double glazing • GCH • Front & rear gardens • Outhouses, shed & green house • Walking distance of beaches & cafes

The Coach House, Cwm Ciddy Barns, Porthkerry, Barry - £579,999
Imposing sympathetically converted barn retaining many original features • Tucked away on outskirts of Barry & Porthkerry Country Park • Set on generous size plot with front & rear gardens • 5 bedrooms set over 2 floors

Tordoff Way, Barry - £159,950
3 bedroom semi detached true bungalow situated in the heart of Barry with far reaching sea views • rarely to market • Lounge/diner • Kitchen with negotiable appliances • Upvc double glazing & GCH • Generous rear garden • Close proximity to Barry Town

Park Road, Barry - £169,000 or £6,000 per annum for shop
Shop unit with one bedroom, recently converted maisonette • Presently trading as a convenience store (not being sold as a going concern) • Option to lease shop without maisonette • Main retail floor 53m²/567ft² • Off road parking

Tynewydd Road, Barry - £285,000
Two storey detached investment property • Rental income of £21,000 per annum • Prime location • Entire building approx 140m² • Rates payable: approx £7704 per annum (2010/11)

Unit 1d Palmersvale Business Centre, Barry - £9,300 per annum
Opportunity to lease 2 storey unit total floor area approx 1,038ft²/96m². Rent to include costs for building insurance, fire and intruder alarms, CCTV and maintenance. Easy access to Penarth, Sully, Cardiff and M4 corridor.

Holton Road, Barry - £7,000 per annum
Shop/offices unit set over 2 floors • Situated off Holton Road thoroughfare, Barry Towns main shopping centre • Total floor area approx 96m²/1035ft² • Reception area • 2/3 offices • Treatment room • Kitchen & toilet facilities • Flexible terms

Ground Floor, Hamilton House, Broad Street, Barry - £7,000 per annum
Opportunity to lease suite of 4 offices • Situated in prominent position in centre of Barry, just off Holton Road • Total floor area approx 94m²/1013ft² • Kitchen area • GCH • Off road parking for 2 vehicles • Flexible terms

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NEW

SOUTH VIEW, RHOOSE

Luxury new build, constructed February 2012. 4 bedrooms, 2 en-suites, family bathroom, 3 reception rooms, gallery landing, sweeping driveway, garage providing ample parking. Enclosed rear garden.

£465,000

NEW

DYFRIG STREET, BARRY

Mid terrace traditional. 3 reception rooms, far reaching water and sea views from front elevation. Eclosed garden-lane access. No chain. In need of some modernising.

£144,950

COLCOT ROAD, BARRY

Bay fronted, semi detached, adjacent to the rear of fields. Living/dining room, conservatory, wc, cloak, kitchen. 3 bedrooms, spacious driveway for ample parking, uPVC dg, gc heating. Viewing highly recommended.

£189,950

NEW

CORNWALL RISE, BARRY

Individually designed. Build approximately 13 years ago. Elevated modern, four double bedrooms, double garage. Attic room with two bedrooms, driveway paved.

£279,950

NEW

KATHLEEN STREET, BARRY

Mid terraced, traditional dwelling, three double bedrooms. No chain. Through living room, ground f loor bathroom and shower room. Enclosed garden.

£119,950

NEW PRICE

WILLOW CRESCENT, BARRY

Built approx 36 years ago. Semi detached property. Larger than average rear garden laid to lawn with raised decking. Diner/kitchen. 1 reception room & conservatory. uPVC dg & combi boiler. Driveway/garage. Opportunity to extend to side and rear.

£146,999

NEW PRICE

YORK PLACE, BARRY

Spacious traditional end of terraced. Five/six bedrooms, versatile living. Three bathrooms, enclosed garden. Garage. Minutues walk to train station.

£194,950

NEW PRICE

HARDY CLOSE, BARRY

Fantastic value. Modern detached, four bedrooms, living room/dining room, wc, cloakroom, sea views from rear. Enclosed garden. Garage/driveway, Close to Cardiff/M4.

£164,950

BLACKBERRY DRIVE, BARRY

Spacious modern detached dwelling. WC cloakroom, living room, open plan kitchen/diner, sitting room (converted garage). Replacement 2011 ensuite and bathroom. Landscaped rear garden. Viewing high recommended.

£224,950

NEW

PONTYPRIDD ROAD, BARRY

Extended traditional semi detached bay fronted bungalow. Three bedrooms, two reception rooms, sun lounge, level enclosed garden. Driveway to front.

£219,950

NEW

BLACKBERRY DRIVE, BARRY

Showhoome presented. Modern detached, four bedroomed, living/dining room, fitted kitchen, enclosed garden. Hot tub to remain. Paved driveway/garage.

£214,950

NEW

PORT ROAD EAST, BARRY

Stunning views over Vale. Dorma detached bungalow. To the ground floor: living, dining room, bathroom and bedroom. To the first floor: Two bedrooms, ensuite and dressing room. Garage/parking.

£329,950

NEW

MARQUIS CLOSE, BARRY

End of link. Modern dwelling and living room, fitted kitchen. 2010 replacement bathroom. Sea views from rear. Parking to front and rear. Viewing highly recommended.

£139,950

NEW PRICE

MILTON ROAD, BARRY

Stunning mid terraced. Two bedrooms, living room, kitchen/diner, enclosed rear garden. UPVC double glazing, gas central heating via combi. Option of off road parking. (subject to usual planning consent).

£99,950

NEW PRICE

MAES Y CWM STREET, BARRY

Four bedrooms, dorma attic conversion, mid terraced traditional amidst shops. Through living room, spacious kitchen/diner. Enclosed rear garden. Permit parking to front.

£139,950

NEW

CONWAY DRIVE, BARRY

Three bedroomed, semi detached, front, side and rear gardens. Living, dining and conservatory. Driveway/garage. Swimming pool, uPVC double glazing. Gas central heating.

£189,950

NEW

GRIFFIN CLOSE, BARRY

Detached property. Highlight Park. Four bedrooms, 2reception rooms, private enclosed rear garden. Driveway leading to garage. Utility room.wc cloakroom.

£224,950

NEW

PYRA COURT, BARRY

First floor apartment. Communal door entry system. Newly fitted kitchen. living room with balcony. Two bedrooms, shower room, uPVC DG, enclosed balcony. Parking in block.

£92,950

TREHARNE ROAD, BARRY

Spacious end of terrace. Two reception rooms, front, side and rear gardens. Driveway providing parking. Three bedrooms, uPVC DG, GC heating. Viewing highly recommended.

£90,000

GWENNOL Y MOR, BARRY

Three storey town house. Semi detached, 4 bedrooms, 2 ensuites and family bathroom. Master with balcony & far reaching views over beach. Level enclosed garden. Drive-way/garage. Fitted wardrobes throughout.

£189,950

COOK ROAD, BARRY

Three bedroomed. modern detached. Living/dining room. Gargage/driveway, enclosed garden. Side access.

£145,000

NEW PRICE

BROOK STREET, BARRY

Mid terraced traditional. Three bedrooms, living/dining room. Ground floor bathroom, enclosed rear garden, Lane access. No chain.

£89,950

NEW

PICTON ROAD, RHOOSE

Four bedroomed, modern semi detached. Living room, kitchen/breakfast, wc cloak. Enclosed rear garden. Driveway/garage. Sea views from rear bedrooms.

£167,750

HEOL ERYR MOR, BARRY

Two bedrooms, partial sea views from first floor rear. Modern mid terraced, ensuite to master. WC cloakroom, living room, kitchen/breakfast. Garage/parking.

£139,950

PORTHKERRY ROAD, BARRY

Victorian mid terraced. Living room, dining room and sitting room. Five bedrooms, spacious kitchen, 11ft bathroom. Original tiled floor in hallway.

£224,950

BRYN Y GLOYN, BARRY

Well presented throughout. Four bedroomed, detached, modern. Views over conservation and sea. Living/dining, kitchen/beakfast. utility. Garage/driveway. No chain.

£239,950

HEOL Y GAER, THE KNAP, BARRY

Dorma bungalow. Show home presented. Sea views from 1st floor. Ground floor: 2 bedrooms, living room, dining room, 2011 fitted kitchen. Family bathroom. To the 1st floor: master bedroom and bathroom. Detached garage/driveway.

£339,950

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H4U Reference 1039867
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- Gas central heating
- Double glazing
- Warden/parking
- Communal entrance

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- Fifth floor (lift)
- Central heating/double-glazing

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H4U Reference 1085605
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- Ground floor
- Gas central heating
- Double glazing
- Parking

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DUNLIN COURT, BARRY

H4U Reference 980652
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- Two-bedroom flat
- Ground floor
- Gas central heating
- Double glazing

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DUNLIN COURT, BARRY

H4U Reference 1008022
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- Double glazing

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GLEBELAND PLACE, ST ATHAN

H4U Reference 248470
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- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Gardens

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HAVANT CLOSE, RHOOSE

H4U Reference 1031987
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MAES YR YSGOL, BARRY

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- Parking

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- Gas central heating
- Double-glazing
- Enclosed rear garden

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MEIRION CLOSE, BARRY

H4U Reference 215954
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- First floor
- Central heating
- Communal gardens

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NIGHTINGALE PLACE, DINAS POWYS

H4U Reference 231518
Suitable for a family
- Two-bedroom house
- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Gardens

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OAK COURT, PENARTH

H4U Reference 1085592
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- First floor (lift)
- Central heating
- Double glazing
- Manager and alarm

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H4U Reference 224321
Suit for a single person or couple over 55-no pets
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- First floor
- Central heating
- Double glazing
- Community alarm
- Communal gardens

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ST DAVIDS CRECSENT, PENARTH

H4U Reference 244711
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- Double-glazing
- Gardens

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TREHARNE ROAD, BARRY

H4U Reference 226276
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- First floor
- Central heating
- Double glazing
- Communal gardens

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H4U Reference 1085616
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- One-bedroom flat
- Ground floor
- Electric storage heating
- Double glazing
- Parking

Rent £75.83 per week including service charge

FEEDBACK

Address	Bids	Band	Reg.
Aberaeron Close	103	Gold+	04/01/12
Awbery House	25	Gold+	21/07/11
Buttrills Road	130	Gold+	19/12/11
Castle Road	49	Gold	29/03/11
Chesterfield Street	87	Gold	06/07/11
Culver Close	99	Gold	14/12/11
ElsFisher Court	15	Gold+	21/11/11
Geraint Place	73	Gold	27/06/11
Matthew Terrace	63	Gold	23/11/11
Manorbier Court	42	Gold	26/07/11
Pendine Close	56	Gold	05/10/11
Phyllis Street	23	Silver+	16/01/12
Redlands Avenue	10	Gold	14/11/11
Station Road	56	Gold	19/09/11

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Family Notices

DARCH
Diana Hellen

Fred and family would like to thank everybody who gave donations to the Red Cross. We would also like to thank the hospital staff at Llandough Hospital for their kind care.

PEPPER
Tessa
(formerly Jewell née Sheppard)

Following a five-year battle with cancer, died peacefully at Macclesfield District General Hospital on February 22, 2012.

Funeral service at Cowbridge RC Church on Monday, March 5 at 11am, followed by interment at Boverton Cemetery. Family flowers only, donations welcome to the Oncology Trust, Macclesfield General Hospital (MacMillan).

RAYBOULD
Edith Flora

Peacefully on February 22 at Bella Vista Care Home, Barry - Edith, aged 100 years.

Edith is resting at Park Independent Funeral Directors, 7 Tynewydd Road, Barry until her service on Friday March 2, at 3.45pm.

The family wish to thank the team of District Nurses and doctors at Highlight Park Medical Centre for the care shown to Edith. Also sincere thanks to all at Bella Vista care home. No flowers please, by request.

Funeral arrangements entrusted to Lyndsay Ellis at Park Funerals on 01446 421212.

SILVESTER
Raymond

Ray passed away very unexpectedly, but peacefully on February 21, 2012.

Adored husband of Jill and a much loved and respected step father to James, Thomas and Kate, step grandfather to 8. Ray was a gentleman in every sense.

He is now at perfect peace. Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Monday March 5, service and cremation 10.30am at Vale of Glamorgan Crematorium, Port Road East, Barry where friends please meet.

Family flowers only, donations in lieu if desired to Ty Hafan Childrens Hospice Wales.

JACOBS
Alfred John

Peacefully on the 23rd February, Alf, formerly of Llantwit Major. Dearly loved father, grandfather, and great grandfather.

Resting at WA Brown & Son, Llantwit Major until the funeral service on Thursday 8th March in St Illtuds Church, followed by interment at Boverton Cemetery. Family flowers only, but donations may be made to Alzheimers Society c/o Funeral Director (cheques only)

HUISH
(née Hiscock)
Pauline Gordon - 'Polly'

Peacefully at home with her family after a long illness, Pauline, loving wife of Steve, much loved mother of Andrea, adored Nans of Lloyd, number one daughter of Elizabeth and the late Roy, treasured sister of Sandra and Philip, sadly missed by Keith, Stephen and Harvey.

Funeral Service at St Tydfil's Church, Llysworney on Monday, 5th March 2012 at 2pm followed by interment at St John the Baptist Church Llanblethian.

Flowers may be sent to Thomas Brothers, Greengate, Ewenny Road, St Brides Major or if preferred donations to Marie Curie, Bridgman Road, Penarth.

CERIANI
Gianfranco

Passed away peacefully at home on February 24th, surrounded by his loving family.

Beloved husband of Giovanna, devoted father to Angelo, Ines and father-in-law of Lisa. Dearly loved Nonno to his eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Resting at Park Independent Funeral Directors, 7 Tynewydd Road, Barry until being received into St Helens RC Church, Wyndham Street, Barry on Thursday 1st March at 4pm. Requiem Mass to take placed on Friday March 2nd at 10.30am, followed by cremation at Vale of Glamorgan Memorial Park, Port Road East, Barry at 12.00pm.

Immediate family flowers only - donations in lieu may be made in the service to the British Lung Foundation in memory of Gianfranco.

Funeral arrangements entrusted to Lyndsay J Ellis at Park Funerals - 01446 421212.

The family would like to thank all the nurses, medical staff, especially Dr Evans, and all the family and friends that enabled Franco to spend his final days at home.

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Any person wishing to make representations in respect of this application should do so to the Licensing Department, Vale of Glamorgan Council Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry CF63 4RU not later than 28 days after the date of this notice. Representations received after this date will not be considered.

A copy of the application can be viewed at the Civic Offices during normal office hours. It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with this application - the maximum fine on summary conviction being £5,000.

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Otto's late try wins game for Cowbridge

A FAST and entertaining game in good conditions resulted in a close encounter, with the home side finally winning by three tries to two.

Due to holiday commitments, Cowbridge were only able to field a bare 15 and were without one or two key players. However, their lively pack soon began to get the better of their opponents and the home side opened the scoring after five minutes.

From a scrum on the Llanishen 22 yard line, the ball was delivered to Rhys Beynon, who offloaded to fellow centre Joe Nott. Brushing aside a number of defenders he dived over to score an excellent try under the posts.

Cowbridge under-13s	19
Llanishen	14

A second try soon followed when lock Josh Evans powered his way downfield and, from the ensuing ruck, prop Tom Edwards broke free to crash over for his first try of the season. Both tries were converted by Cai Evans, who was controlling the game well with some clever tactical kicking.

The second half saw a transformed Llanishen take the game to Cowbridge. Their pack began to dominate rucks and mauls and provided their backs with good, quick possession.

Within the space of five minutes, they had equalised with two well-taken tries, both converted, to level the score at 14-all.

The game then swung back and forth, with neither side able to break the tight defences. Brave tackles by Charlie Martin, Harrison Stevens, Tomos Evans-Williams and Seán Davies prevented the visitors from taking the lead; and outstanding work from the forwards, with Owain Jenkins, Matthew Keating, Harry Hopkins and Duncan Ace bulldozing their way upfield on a number of occasions, allowed the home team to gain valuable territory.

It came as no surprise when Cowbridge finally scored the winning try when Otto Guwy, who was outstanding throughout in all aspects of the game, received a clever pass from scrum half Osian John.

He charged down the blind side, narrowly avoiding the touchline, and evaded three desperate attempts to stop him scoring the winning try.

ML

Under-9s get 'reality check'

COWBRIDGE under-9s travelled to Llanishen recently, playing two games at Llanishen Park, which turned out to be a reality check for the boys.

Game 1: Llanishen 7, Cowbridge 2

In the first game, Llanishen adopted a relatively limited approach but unfortunately Cowbridge's tackling let them down and they conceded three long-range tries.

Another problem was the turning over of possession with the ball being controlled far better by the opposition. In the second half, despite some excellent individual efforts, Llanishen scored four further tries, with tries being scored for Cowbridge by Iwan-Thomas Bartle and Dewi Williams, both of whom should be mentioned for their efforts throughout the game in any event.

Another mention should be given to James and Matthew Gilvear whose efforts particularly were unstinting.

Game 2: Llanishen 5, Cowbridge 1

In the other game, Cowbridge were undone by a much more streetwise team. It's difficult to complain about the possession levels as Cowbridge had the ball for the same amount of time but turned it over on far too many occasions, thus putting themselves under pressure.

Holding on to the ball in contact is something that the boys will have to work on. Initially, excellent defence kept Llanishen out, but, reflecting a trend in the game, Llanishen continually recycled the ball at pace and wore down the defence and the opposition scored their first try.

A quite excellent passing movement then led to a try for Jake Williams and the pattern for the initial Llanishen try then repeated itself, with initially strong defence ultimately breaking down and another try for Llanishen.

The efforts that the boys made on their own line defensively should not be underestimated, leading to a half-time score of 2-1 to Llanishen.

The second half started with Cowbridge possession but sadly the ball was lost through a knock on ultimately leading to Llanishen working their way down the field. This move was eventually broken down through an excellent tackle by Harry Whittaker. Cowbridge's possession ended with Jake Williams being tackled into touch.

A number of players virtually tackled themselves to a standstill including Jack Reilly and Ioan Davies, but Llanishen still scored three tries. A special mention also for Oliver Jarmain for his all-round play.

Squad: Iwan-Thomas Bartle, Sam Coates, Harry Crane, Ioan Davies, Jay Downes, Gruff Ford, James Gilvear, Matthew Gilvear, David Harris, Robbie Hawkins, Ellis Howell, Oliver Jarmain, Aled Leitch, Charlie Locke, Joe Marshman, McKinley Parsons, Tom Pugh, Jack Reilly, Harry Whittaker, Dewi Williams, Jake Williams, Elis Greenwood and Rhys Williams. **JS**

Cowbridge under-12s edge close encounter

With only 16 players available for the trip to Pencoed this game was going to test the strength and depth of the Cowbridge under-12s' squad.

The first try began from a scrum with Ioan Lewis taking the right option and testing the narrow side with a short pass to wing, Evan Williams, who evaded the back-row to score. Evan then converted to produce a 7 – 0 lead.

Further forward pressure resulted in the visitors' second try with Jac Roberts outstanding with his pick-up and drives taking play within 5 metres of the try-line. From quick ruck ball Jake Griffiths powered over to increase the lead.

The Pencoed forwards responded well and became more competitive. Following an impressive sequence of passes they secured their opening try for a 12 – 5 half time score.

The second half saw Pencoed put further points on the board when they worked the narrow side and their wing slipped through a weak Cowbridge tackle to score.

Later, a Pencoed turn-over resulted in them breaking through tackles to earn a 15–12 lead. Having relinquished the lead for the first time the Cowbridge boys did not let their heads drop and there followed one of the most impressive periods of committed play that we have seen this season.

Scrum-half, Ioan Lewis read the game well and kicked the ball into the Pencoed danger zone. Great play from forwards, Ellis Simon, Max Lucas, Dylan Cottle and William Davies secured quick ball to Harrison Ashby whose probing run gained valuable ground.

Another quick ruck and the ball spun out to Rhys Bradshaw who drew two defenders before providing the try-scoring pass to Morgan Gore and secure a 17 – 15 victory.

GD

Under-14s keep up winning ways

The Cowbridge under-14s continued their winning ways with a visit to Llandaff North RFC sporting a full squad.

Nathan Robson opened the scoring with a typically muscular run from his own half, quickly followed by a try from Cowbridge's other flying winger Rian Thomas – Matt Harper converted to rattle up a 12 - 0 lead.

Llandaff North are a very committed side and they quickly replied with a try, but two quick scores by Nathan Robson to earn a half-time hat-trick took Cowbridge into a 24-5 interval lead.

Llandaff replied quickly in the second half as their pack started to turn up the pressure and Cowbridge had to battle very hard to contain the opposition.

Tom Lucas came off the bench to score a fabulous individual try and then Ben Jones touched down after a searing run from Rian Thomas breached the Llandaff defence – Matt Harper converted both to take the score to 38 - 12.

The ever-dynamic Joe Davies then went over for Cowbridge's seventh try before Llandaff produced the last score of the game to produce a final result of 43 - 19.

A big thank you to Llandaff North for providing a referee and their after match hospitality

TEAM - George Thomas, Tom Evans, Jac Davies, Jack Anderson, Fraser McGhan, Ed Couzens, Luke John, Ben Jones, Josh Brace, Ellis Poulden, Tom Lucas, Matt Harper, Hywel Williams, Rian Thomas, Nathan Robson, Joe Davies, Pete Anderson, Ashford Thomas, Gabe Newham.

GD

Under-11s play a fine game – despite weather

ON the coldest and wettest day of the season, the Cowbridge under-11 A team played their most memorable game.

With a player short and borrowing two players (Jack and Cameron) from another Cowbridge team, they fought heroically to hold Sully to 1-1 at half time. It was an end to end performance, with Declan Brookes firing an equaliser, and goalkeeper Hari Hartmann, keeping Cowbridge in the game.

Half time allowed Harry Donnithorne to join the attack, with Gabriel Davies having many shots on goal but just missing the target. Griff Naylor supported the midfield and had his game of the season, while Sam Duncombe was strong in defence.

Against the run of play, Sully took the lead and with only two minutes to go, Gabriel Davies managed a well-deserved equaliser.

The final whistle brought celebrations all round as all the boys played a great game of football, despite being soaked to the skin.

Thanks to Jack and Cameron for joining at such short notice. Thanks also to all the Sully boys too for a great game of football. Final score, 2-2.

RD

Vale's Maria has ice challenge before her Siberian marathon

EXTREME temperatures are no bar to Wales's adventure racer Maria Leijerstam.

She has been biking on ice at Cardiff Ice Rink in preparation for her 600km race across Siberia's frozen Lake Baikal on March 15 where temperatures can dip as low as minus 40ºC and winds can blow at 200mph.

Maria from the Vale has already completed the Marathon des Sables where she ran 250km in six days in 40ºC temperatures.

"Having survived a warm challenge, I just have to see if I can withstand a cold one too," said Maria.

When Maria completes this cycle on the largest fresh water lake in the world, she will become the first solo woman to have done so.

"Conditions are going to dictate my speed and route choice and therefore it's impossible to predict my finish time," said Maria.

Maria will be riding a Qoroz Titanium Mountain bike, which has been fitted out with ice tyres to ensure she gets enough grip on the ice.

Lizzie's gold

YEAR-8 pupil Lizzie Dare from Llantwit Major School was invited to compete in an international gymnastics competition from February 17-18 in Florida, USA.

The competition saw gymnasts from across the world competing as well as the young Olympic hopefuls from the USA.

Lizzie did fantastically well and brought home the gold medal on the beam and silver on the vault.

She was placed sixth overall in the all-around competition.

Lizzie trains at the Welsh Institute of Sport for up to 30 hours a week.

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The new Chevy copes well with all driving conditions

ABOVE: The Chevrolet Aveo.

MOTORING with TIM SAUNDERS

LONG journeys have a knack of highlighting a car's strengths and weaknesses.

It was such a jaunt to the Excel centre in London that provided a good opportunity to put the attractive Chevrolet Aveo 1.3 diesel five-door hatchback through its paces.

Foolishly, I had relied on some internet directions, which I later realised, took me the long way round, making me late for a meeting.

The route took me through such glamorous locations as Wandsworth, Clapham and Kennington, which all suffered from ludicrously long tailbacks, resulting in the Aveo's engine stop/start reliably cutting in virtually every time the traffic halted.

That diesel engine can be a little vocal on occasions, especially when starting, while the five-speed box is a joy to use, smoothly changing through the gears.

That said, there are some occasions when public transport is simply easier and more convenient to use, and this is certainly the case when travelling to Excel.

My return route was through the Dartford Tunnel, and the Aveo coped well with the higher speeds of the homeward journey.

The steering mounted cruise control proved very useful especially for keeping within speed limits. Some road noise could be heard within the cabin but this was no worse than in any of the competition.

In many respects, the little Aveo feels like a larger vehicle and while it is clearly not a sports car it is responsive and nippy and really good fun to drive when pushing it hard and throwing it round corners.

Luxuries include air conditioning and electric front windows while the digital speedometer reminds me of Kitt, Knight Rider's famous 1982 Trans-Am car. The only criticism is that the handbrake is too close to the driver for comfort, in a similar way to some Protons, but I dare say you get used to it.

The quality of the fabrics and overall comfort is good and I like the futuristic curved dash. There's a reasonable driving position, too, although the massive amount of headroom does take a little getting used to but good for those over six foot.

Externally, Chevy's owner, GM, has borrowed some design cues from others, which work well, such as making this five-door look like a three by concealing the rear door handles. I also particularly like the striking lights at the front, which help give this small Yank a purposeful look.

Parkers, the car experts, say: "It drives well and is refined for a car of its size. Despite being a small car it feels comfortable on the motorway and soaks up the bumps without issue.

"Inside, features have been carried over from other models in the range such as the Cruze and Orlando. It feels well built with plenty of neat touches and there's lots of room, even for taller drivers."

All-in-all, the Aveo is an accomplished little vehicle.

Model tested: Chevrolet Aveo 1.3 (95bhp) LTZ 5d; Economy: 68mpg; 0-60mph: 12.2secs; Top speed: 108mph; Power: 93bhp; New price range: £9,995– £13,615.

Cottrell Park team in running for award

ABOVE: Cottrell Park ladies first team.

THE ladies first team at Cottrell Park has been nominated for the Vale of Glamorgan Sports Personality Awards, in the 'Team of the Year' category.

The awards ceremony will take place at The Memorial Hall in Barry on Friday, April 27, with the doors opening at 7pm.

The event will be hosted by television presenter, Arfon Haines Davies.

There will be eight categories awarded during the evening.

Tickets are available from the district sports council on 01446 704748.

A club spokeswoman said: "All the management and staff at Cottrell Park wish the ladies' first team the best of luck."

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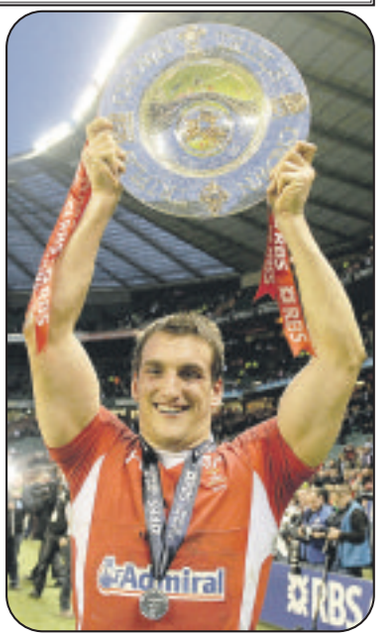
TRIPLE CROWN WALES LAY GHOST OF 'TWICKERS PAST'

– and take the future in their hands

BACK PAGE COMMENT by Don John

RIGHT: Captain Sam Warburton proudly lifts the Triple Crown. Picture by Huw Evans Agency



FOR more than two decades, Welsh teams and their ever-loyal army of supporters taking the long and winding road that leads from the Taff to the Thames for the biennial visit to fortress Twickenham, have journeyed more in nervous hope than realistic expectation.

More often than not, the outcome was the same – defeat – sometimes narrow, sometimes not, with the occasional horror show thrown in for good measure. (*Who can ever forget that humiliating August day on the eve of Rugby World Cup 2007, when a mix'n'match Welsh team was crushed 62–5, to the taunts of 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot' reverberating around the vast stadium?)*

Mind you, it was not always thus; though one would have to travel a little further back, to the last golden age of Welsh rugby, for a time when 'HQ' held no fears for the 1970s team of Gareth, Gerald, Barry, JPR (who particularly revelled in taking on the men in white!) Merve, *et al.*

How many times – with rare exceptions - since then, have Welsh teams lacking that inbuilt self-confidence, taken to the field as underdogs – and played like it – mentally beaten from the outset by the so-called 'Twickenham factor'?

In that gloomy climate of defeatism, invariably the question for even the most die-hard fans was not whether Wales would win, but by how much they would lose.

That was certainly not the anticipated scenario on Saturday, with Wales for once in the unaccustomed role of bookies' favourites to win the Triple Crown decider between these two arch rivals – on the back of sharply-contrasting displays in last year's Rugby World Cup and also the opening four fixtures in this year's Six Nations.

This time, it was Wales, so impressive against Ireland and Scotland, who presented the more powerful physical threat; while reconstructed England, who had scrambled to unconvincing wins over Scotland and Italy, were the team in transition following their recent turmoils.

Even so, some doubted if Wales, so used to the underdog label, could handle the mental pressure as title favourites – but to his credit, skipper Sam Warburton angrily dismissed this inverted defeatism, vowing that his team would "embrace it" in the 123rd meeting between the two nations.

His stance was vindicated by the record books, which showed just how evenly matched they are; for surprisingly, despite years of English dominance, Wales had still notched a total of 54 wins (including the 2008 Grand Slam stunner at Twickenham) to England's 56, with 12 games drawn.

Thus the stage was set for another nail-chewer at 4pm on Saturday, with Warren Gatland's team out to answer all the questions – and lay a few Twickenham ghosts to rest – while further proving that this is not another false dawn and the long-awaited Welsh renaissance really is here to stay.

And what a cracker it turned out to be – not a rugby classic by any means – but pulsating with drama and excitement from first minute to last; with Wales finally emerging triumphant to claim the country's 20th Triple Crown with a 19-12 victory – though only after a battle royal whose outcome was in doubt right up to the final whistle.

Full marks to the unfamiliar-looking England team, who recovered from a very nervy opening spell to repel intense Welsh pressure that saw wing George North almost power through for a try less than two minutes from the kick-off – and then Leigh Halfpenny miss with a penalty attempt.

In fact, it was the home team that went ahead through the first of their four penalties by debutant outside half Owen Farrell, who outplayed his opposite number, the usually impeccable Rhys Priestland. (The latter seemed flustered and out-of-sorts and his clumsy yellow card early in the second half could well have cost his team dear in a game so finely balanced).

Leigh Halfpenny brought Wales level with a well-struck penalty and his tit-for-tat kicking duel with Farrell continued with another penalty apiece, before the latter had the last word just before the interval, after a strangely ill-at-ease Wales conceded yet another penalty, to trail 6-9 as play resumed.

Within minutes, came Priestland's sending off and Farrell slotted over the easy penalty in front of the posts for a 12-6 lead.

Not for the first time recently, indiscipline had reduced Wales to 14 men and with their main playmaker in the 'sin bin', the situation now looked ominous indeed, as a much-improved England side were encouraged to lay siege to the Welsh defence.

However, they would not add further to their score.

As noted in this column previously, this new generation of young Welsh players is made of sterner stuff and not only held out, but in fact exerted pressure of their own, to reduce arrears with a third penalty by Halfpenny.

With Priestland back on the field, joined by Ryan Jones, who replaced Alun Wyn Jones, the enthralling tussle resumed on equal terms and when Halfpenny levelled the scores at 12-12 with a fourth penalty, the game was set fair for a grandstand finish – with just 10 minutes remaining on the clock.

It would need a moment of individual brilliance to break the stalemate – which came in the shape of young Scarlet centre Scott Williams, who had replaced the injured Jamie Roberts at half time.

With less than five minutes to go to full time, he wrenched the ball from England's Courtney Lawes, followed up his kick ahead, scooped up the ball, and dived over for a match-winning try near the posts, which Halfpenny converted, to put Wales in the lead for the first time at 19-12.

Amazingly, the drama was not yet over, for with the referee now looking at his watch, England launched a last desperate attack, but a claimed touchdown in the corner was disallowed and the whistle sounded to start Triple Crown celebrations for the Welsh faithful.

A hard-fought win, yes, but this resolute young Welsh squad have surely now laid those old Twickenham demons to rest.

More importantly, despite not hitting the glittering heights of their World Cup displays, the gutsy manner of their victory once again demonstrated the giant strides, both physical and mental, they have taken under Gatland's stewardship.

Now the squad are two tantalising games away from matching the achievements of their illustrious 70s predecessors – with a third Grand Slam in the space of seven years or so.

First there is battle-scarred Italy at home next week and while a win cannot, of course, be taken for granted, it could then set up a mouth-watering Grand Slam showdown with France (provided the latter defeat Ireland) and a chance to avenge that painful World Cup semi-final defeat.

What a prospect lies in store over the next few weeks!

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